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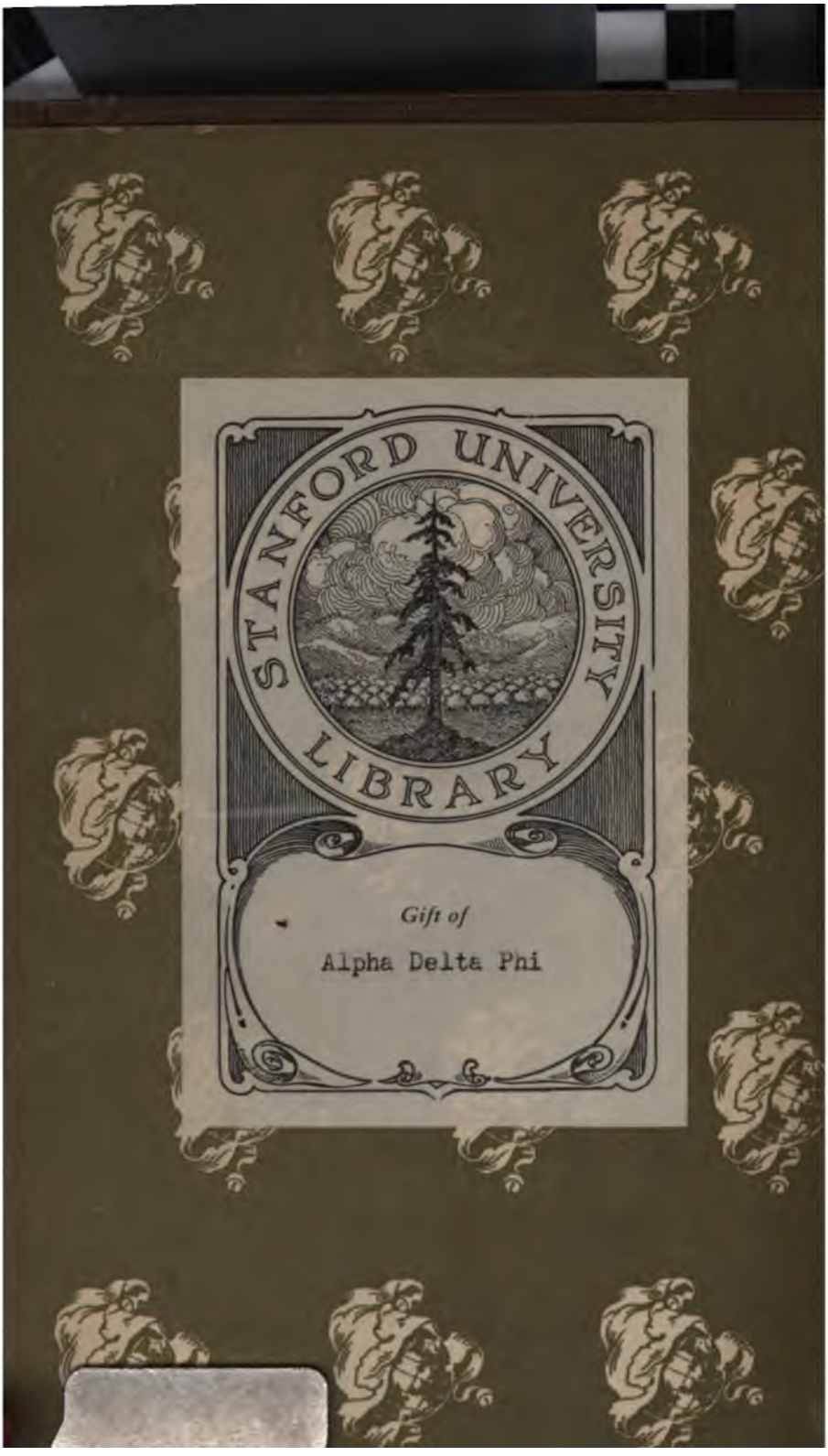
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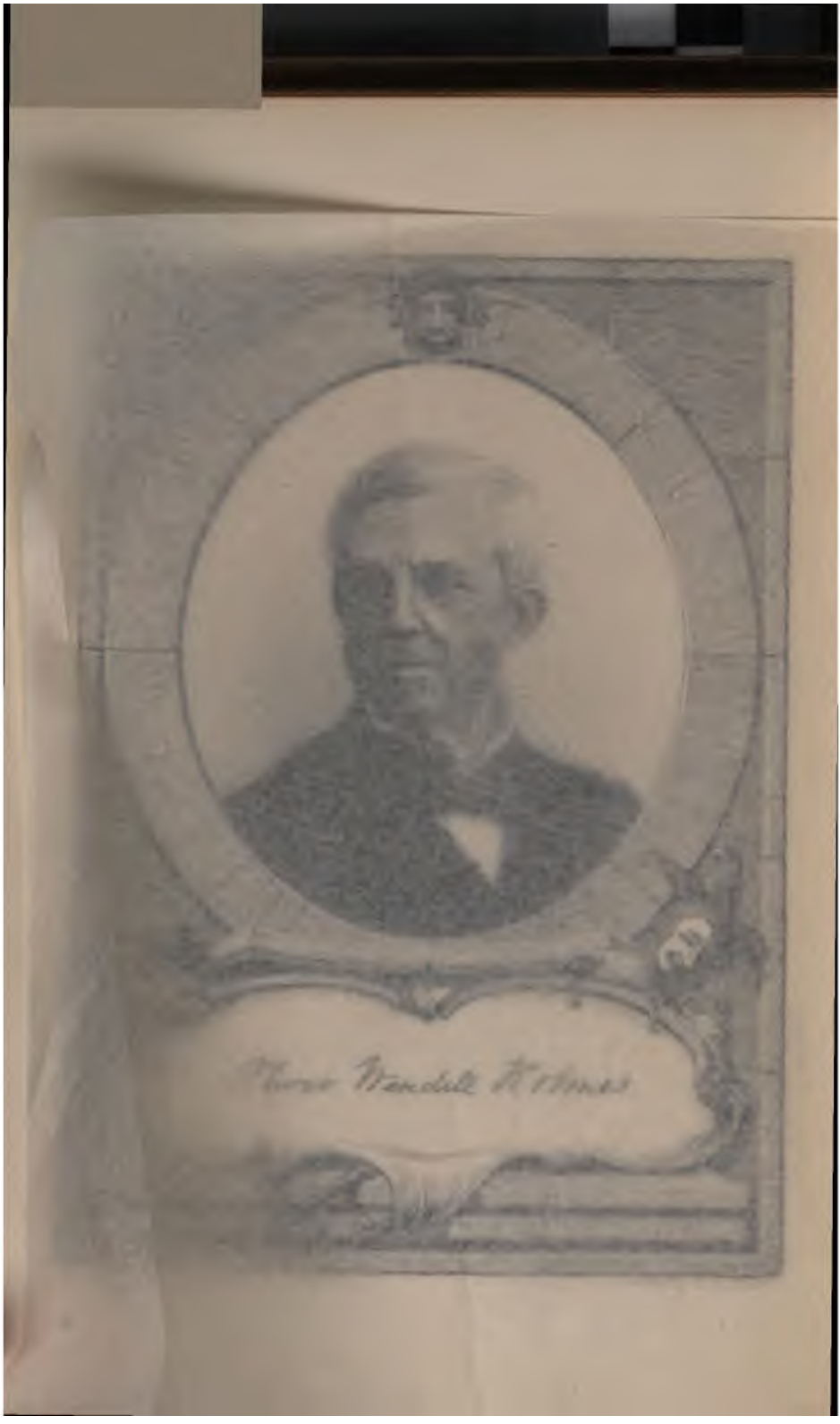

The World's Wit and Humor

AMERICAN

Introduction by
JOEL CHANDLER HARRIS

Volume I
Franklin to Beecher

New York
The Review of Reviews Company
1906

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RAHWAY, N. J.

A Word from the Publishers

THE publishers and editors of this work have set out with the deliberate plan to make it the most comprehensive anthology of wit and humor ever brought into existence: a comparison with kindred collections will show the scope of the present work to be at once national and international.

In apportioning the space among the nations, we have naturally given the fullest possible representation to America. A reader of any given citizenship will prefer that humor which is nearest his own understanding and his own point of view, in other words that humor which the writers of his own country have provided. Hence out of the fifteen volumes we have devoted no less than five to the comic genius of the United States.

The remaining ten are composed of specimens of wit and humor drawn from the rest of the world. A superficial glance over the table of contents will show that every age and all nationalities are included. One meets with selections from the classic Hindu fables of an author whose very name and date are matters of uncertainty, and who may have lived about one thousand years before the birth of Christ. One also finds the latest and most distinctive efforts of George Ade and Peter Finley Dunne. Now a Brahmin of three thousand years ago must not be expected to approach the task of producing humor

in just the same way as Mr. Dooley—by which we mean to suggest that as all ages and countries are represented in our collection, so are all kinds of mirth.

Mark Twain, for instance, possesses a sense of humor utterly different from that of Balzac. Yet both are given here. Molière and Homer are very far apart in their manners of thought and expression; so are Sheridan and Cervantes, Bret Harte and Aristophanes, Dickens and Juvenal, Leopardi and Rabelais, the Brothers Grimm and Omar Khayyam—but all of these are quoted, as indeed they must be—in the World's Wit and Humor. There may be readers who will find fault with the inclusion of such writers as Æsop, Ibsen, Carlyle, Confucius, who are not usually regarded as uproarious by the average American. However, it is part of the mission of this anthology to show the average American what is taken for wit and humor by other minds than his. He will smile with most of them, we conjecture.

Whatever is best worth knowing in foreign comic literature is represented here, so that although the educated American might be hard put to it if it were necessary for him to recollect more than two or three humorists belonging to the Iberian and Apennine Peninsulas, he would in Volume XIII discover thirty-seven. The miscellaneous department (see Volume XIV) is for lands which in this particular regard are of minor importance, yet which have humorous authors. For the Oriental division, concluding the series, a relatively small number of pages may seem to have been allotted; but the bulk of Eastern literature is little known or hardly accessible, and its spirit is farthest from the understanding and appreciation of the American reader.

A perfectly regular distribution of space according to merit has been impossible. One author, owing to his succinct style

and small output may receive justice in three pages, while another writer, of no greater genius, but more diffuse, voluminous, and versatile, will need at least twenty-five pages to be appreciated.

In general, the famous works have been drawn on, but anything of high excellence deserving greater popularity than it possessed has been unhesitatingly exploited by the editors.

To avoid confusion, proper names are rendered in the form generally used by well-educated persons—as: Martial for Marcus Valerius Martialis, or Lope de Vega for Felix Lope de Vega Carpio. The date of each author follows his name in the table of contents; or if the years of his birth and death cannot be given, then the approximate period at which he lived is printed.

Every selection in this work is intended to be complete and comprehensible, as it stands by itself. That, however, there may be, out of the whole fifteen volumes, single pieces which are not at once understood by every one, may well be true. In spite of this possibility, we have rigidly abstained from annotation. It would have been immensely difficult to decide how much explanatory information to offer, and, on the other hand, most undesirable to sacrifice a possibly large amount of text to space taken up by supplementary matter. Besides, notes disfigure a book. They break one's continuity of thought and are otherwise a source of annoyance to many readers.

Covering a literary field of such magnificent dimensions, the editors have not altogether avoided abridgment and condensation. For example, there are essays like Defoe's "Shortest Way with the Dissenters," and stories like Castelnuovo's "47th Proposition," which are intelligible and amusing without being printed word for word. When we give enough of such a composition to embody its substance or to characterize fully its

theme, we head the piece with the title of the original, as in the two cases referred to.

In the search for the best texts of classics in this field we found certain collections especially suited to our purpose, either through cosmopolitan variety of scope or superior editorial merits. We therefore deem it appropriate to mention these collections here, as well as the publishers who issue them:

The Bohn Library, London: Bell and Sons; New York: The Macmillan Company. Morley's Universal Library, London and New York: George Routledge and Sons. Cassell's National Library, London and New York: Cassell and Company. The translations from foreign languages published by Walter Scott, of London.

Of the many sources helpful to the present compilation, we thankfully name as the most directly suggestive and practically valuable:

Dircks' *International Humor Series*, London. Spofford and Shapley's *Library of Humorous Literature*, Philadelphia. Morris' *Half Hours with the Best Humorous Authors*, Philadelphia. Parton's *Humorous Poetry of the English Language*, Boston. Besant's *French Humorists*, London. Hermann's *Composiciones Jocosas Españoles*, Leipsic. Kuka's *Wit and Humor of the Persians*, Bombay. Bowring's collections of translated verse, London. Carrington's *Anthology of French Poetry*, Oxford. Brooks' *Songs and Ballads from the German*, Boston. Leigh Hunt's poems translated from the Italian, London. Rossetti's *Dante and His Circle*, London. Wiener's *Anthology of Russian Literature*, New York. Leger's *Recueil de Contes Populaires Slaves*, Paris. Maurice and Cooper's *Nineteenth Century Caricature*, New York. Cotta'sche *Bibliothek der Weltlitteratur*, Stuttgart. Reclam's *Universal-Bibliothek*, Leipsic. *Biblioteca Nazionale*, Successori Le Monnier,

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Table of Contents

PORTRAIT OF OLIVER WENDELL HOLMES . *Frontispiece*

PAGE

A WORD FROM THE PUBLISHERS vii

JOEL CHANDLER HARRIS

Humor in America xvii

BENJAMIN FRANKLIN (1706–1790).

Poor Richard to the "Courteous Reader."—"Poor Richard's Almanack" 3

The Whistle 14

Dialogue between Franklin and the Gout . . . 17

Friends and Acquaintances.—"Autobiography" . 24

Franklin as a Teetotaler.—"Autobiography" . . 32

Maxims 34

The Ephemera 35

Model of a Letter, etc. 37

To Miss Georgiana Shipley 38

Franklin at Versailles 40

Epitaph for Himself 46

FRANCIS HOPKINSON (1737–1791).

The Battle of the Kegs.—"Miscellaneous Essays and Occasional Writings" 47

American Wit and Humor

JAMES K. PAULDING (1779–1860). PAGE

The Revenge of St. Nicholas.—"Tales of the Good Woman" 51

WASHINGTON IRVING (1783–1859).

Wouter Van Twiller 67

Wilhelmus Kieft 73

Peter Stuyvesant 77

Antony Van Corlear 78

General Van Poffenburgh.—"Knickerbocker's History of New York" 80

The Legend of Sleepy Hollow.—"The Sketch-Book" 82

FITZ-GREENE HALLECK (1790–1870).

A Fragment 118

Domestic Happiness 120

AUGUSTUS B. LONGSTREET (1790–1870).

The Horse-Swap.—"Georgia Scenes" . . . 122

Georgia Theatrics.—"Georgia Scenes" . . . 131

SEBA SMITH (1792–1868).

My First Visit to Portland 135

WILLIAM CULLEN BRYANT (1794–1876).

The Mosquito 139

ROBERT C. SANDS (1799–1832).

A Monody 142

ALBERT GORTON GREENE (1802–1868).

Old Grimes 149

Table of Contents

NATHANIEL HAWTHORNE (1804–1864). PAGE

The British Matron.—"Lemington Spa," in Our Old Home 151

Dr. Heidegger's Experiment.—"Twice-Told Tales" 153

Mr. Higginbotham's Catastrophe.—"Twice-Told Tales" 155

N. P. WILLIS (1806–1867).

Miss Albina McLush 180

Love in a Cottage 184

Tom Fane and I.—"Prose Writings" 185

EDMUND QUINCY (1808–1877).

Who Paid for the Prima Donna?—"Wensley and Other Stories" 201

OLIVER WENDELL HOLMES (1809–1894).

An Aphorism and a Lecture 224

Foreign Correspondence.—"Autocrat of the Breakfast-Table" 231

Music-Pounding.—"The Poet at the Breakfast-Table" 234

Dislikes.—"The Poet at the Breakfast-Table" . 235

The Deacon's Masterpiece 238

My Aunt 242

The Ballad of the Oysterman 244

The Height of the Ridiculous 245

A Walk with the Schoolmistress.—"Autocrat of the Breakfast-Table" 247

HARRIET BEECHER STOWE (1811–1896).

The Minister's Wooing 254

American Wit and Humor

W. T. THOMPSON (1812–1882). PAGE

A Proposal.—"Major Jones's Courtship" . . . 262

Practical Jokes.—"Major Jones's Courtship" . . 268

HENRY WARD BEECHER (1813–1887).

Deacon Marble.—"Norwood" 274

The Deacon's Trout.—"Norwood" 276

Humor in America

By Joel Chandler Harris

ONCE upon a time, in the early beginnings of the Republic, when the thirteen colonies, by the force of arms, and the growth and pressure of public opinion, both at home and abroad, had begun to adjust their social and political organization to fit the demands of freedom and independence, it chanced that one of the circuit judges in Georgia was a man named Dooley. Now, there is nothing in a name, and there is everything. This Mr. Dooley was a native-born American, and there is every reason to believe that his nature was seized and possessed by the same gentle and genial shadow of melancholy that has spread its wings over the lives of so many great men. He had been an eye-witness to one of the most harrowing scenes enacted during the Revolution—he had seen his own father dragged from his home and foully murdered by the Tories in that part of the State where no quarter was asked or given. The scene must have made a lasting impression on the lad, but, if he ever referred to it in public or private, the fact has not been recorded by his contemporaries.

As a matter of fact, however, we know very little of his contemporaries. No doubt there were other judges on the bench in Georgia more distinguished, and other lawyers more famous in that day; but their names have been forgotten, and,

save for the tax-rolls, or family and court records, would long ago have perished from the face of the earth. There is nothing to show that Judge Dooley was a great man in his profession, or that his intellectual equipment was such as to set him apart from his contemporaries; but he had the gift of humor in a surpassing degree, and this fact has brought his name down to this generation, and has flavored his memory with a peculiar and lasting fragrance.

For some reason or other, no doubt political—for the controversies of that day were far more strenuous than they are now—Judge Dooley was challenged to mortal combat by a contemporary who had the misfortune to have a wooden leg. The judge accepted the challenge with a condition attached. To insure perfect equality for both parties, he insisted that one of his legs should be encased in a bee-gum—the bee-gums of that day being fashioned from sections of a hollow tree. This, of course, added fury to the anger of the challenger, who declared that the condition proposed was a more outrageous insult than the original provocation; and he gave notice that he would post the judge in the public prints of the day. Judge Dooley, responding, announced that, so far as he was personally concerned, he would rather fill every newspaper in the land than one grave, which, in the then existing condition of mining and surveying might turn out to be a misfit.

On another occasion, when the sheriff of one of the counties in his circuit, by way of showing him a little extra attention, placed a small pitcher of toddy, instead of water, at his hand, the judge sampled the offering, smacked his lips loudly, and commanded the astonished official to fetch him some more water from the same spring. Once, when about to engage in personal combat with an assailant, who was armed with a knife, and while three or four friends were trying to restrain

him, he turned to them, and remonstrated. "Gentlemen," he cried, "any one of you can hold me; the rest of you go and hold the other fellow!" There was an instant explosion of laughter, in which the judge's assailant joined as heartily as the rest, and good feeling was immediately restored.

These examples of American humor, which have been the means of relieving tradition of its heaviness, will serve excellently well as an introduction to this modest collection of American humor, which makes no pretension to completeness. For many reasons, completeness is out of the question, for, in a compilation of this kind when you have done your best, the best is still to be done, especially in a land where certain forms of humor have been discovered in the wild creatures of the wood, not to mention the inimitable drolleries that observers have found in the barn-yard. Moreover, as likely as not, your dearest friend has a volume of humor on the press; and you cannot overcome the belief that your neighbor, who, for reasons of health and economy, shingles his house by lamplight, is about to add to the gaiety of nations by gathering up and committing to print the casual comments of the people whom his industry has disturbed. Under such circumstances, the sense of incompleteness must necessarily take possession of the average compiler.

And this sense of incompleteness is made all the keener by a knowledge of the fact that much that is best and most characteristic in American humor has never had the advantage of type and binding. Much has been lost, but much has been preserved in the oral literature of the common people, having been handed down from generation to generation; and such of it as still persists is perhaps the cream of the best. The pungent and racy anecdote, smelling of the soil, that is told to illustrate a moral, or to give point to an argument, the happy

allusion to some memory or tradition, the dramatic manner giving an added perfection, are all a part and parcel of American humor and give piquancy to its peculiarities.

It may be said of us, with some degree of truth, that we have a way of living humorously, and are conscious of the fact; that our view of life and its responsibilities is, to say the least, droll and comfortable; and there seems never to have been a day in our history when the American view of things generally was not charged or trimmed with humor. This fact, unimportant and insignificant as it seems to be, has tided our statesmen, as well as the common people, over many rough experiences, and has seasoned many disasters that would otherwise have wrought ruin and despair. At least one humorist of world-wide renown has sat in the President's chair, and it would not be going too far to say that American diplomacy has achieved its greatest victories since the chair of state has been occupied by a gentleman who was noted for his humor long before his statesmanship had been put to the test.

First and last, humor has played a very large part in our political campaigns; in fact, it may be said that it has played almost as large a part as principles—which is the name that politicians give to their theories. It is a fact that is common to the experience of those who embark in politics that the happy allusion, the humorous anecdote, dramatically told—especially if it have the added perfection of timeliness—will change the whole prospects of a political struggle, even on the most extensive field.

The forms of humor that are preserved in the oral literature of the people are very dear to them, and for the best of reasons. It is based on their unique experiences; it is a part of their personality; it belongs to their history; and it seems, in some ways, to be an assurance of independence and strength, of

sanity and wisdom, of honesty and simplicity. It need not be said that the hold which the name of Abraham Lincoln has upon the people of the whole country is based largely on the exquisite tact with which he handled the homely humor that runs riot among the common people. Other nations have wonder-tales and the various forms of folk-lore as it is known to our friends the scientists; but the folk-lore of the Republic consists almost wholly of humor, and, as it happens, it is the one quality, apart from religion—and it fits in capitally with that—necessary to keep all things sound and sweet and wholesome. Moreover, the humor that is characteristic of the American mind—that seems, indeed, to be its most natural and inevitable product—can be found in no other nation under the sun, for it is possible only where many mixtures of many peoples have been worked into one homogeneous whole on the broad basis of Anglo-Saxon and Celtic thought.

The selections that are presented as in some degree representative of American humor body forth only that which has assumed the tangible shape of print, and, while they are sufficiently distinctive, while they are alive and palpitating with the peculiarities that belong to our national experience, our climate, and our form of government, they are neither so peculiar nor so distinctive as the humor that belongs to our oral literature. We speak the English language, or—to be perfectly fair to the genial beef-eaters to whom we are related by blood and finance—a form of English dialect called American, and, whether we will or no, we are all the time trying to conform to the standards of written English in form and expression, and to the general trend of English methods that are to be found in what are termed the British classics. This is inevitable, and no fault is to be found with it; but, at the same time, the fact must be recognized that these forms and methods

give rise to a certain degree of artificiality when an effort is made to fit American humor to their measure. In this sense, it could be said that all forms of literary expression are artificial in their nature, but it is not necessary to go so far or to lay undue stress on a poignant truth. The fact remains that the vernacular, as distinct from literary form and finish, is the natural vehicle of the most persistent and most popular variety of American humor: hence the frequent employment of what is called dialect. This necessity has had its influence abroad, and the typical American—the man who represents the common people—is supposed to be a person indifferent to the ordinary refinements of life—a careless galoot, indifferent to the course of events and utterly reckless.

Mr. Kipling's ballad of an American takes the measure of this typical person as he is thought of abroad, and presents him at full length. It must be admitted that the figure Mr. Kipling draws is neither a heroic nor a pretty one; but this is because the poet is inclined to take American humor too seriously. It is far from meaning all it says, and the various antics which it reports as taking place before high heaven are merely pleasing inventions. The poet preserves the unities by placing the American spirit on the witness-stand, and this spirit, after venturing to make a list of incredible faults and virtues, announces that it will save the reckless American at last. American humor is a temperamental quality, and belongs to the many instead of a few chosen ones; and yet, when it is taken as seriously as our foreign friends are inclined to take it, its whole effect is destroyed, and we have a view, not of the genuine American, but of a grinning loafer at the corner grocery, who is willing to match with destiny for beers.

Nevertheless, the insight of the poet is superior to the impression made on him by American humor as a whole, and, in

spite of his scorn for the outward aspect of the American, there is something fine and large and free in the figure he draws, for it is not to be denied that there is a certain grimness about the home-made portraits of ourselves painted by our humorists —something suggestive of the soil, in spite of prosperity and in the face of a material and commercial progress without a parallel. There is nothing attractive about them save to those who know something of the motives and the interior workings of the American mind, which, in spite of its humorous idiosyncrasies, stands for business, for the aggressive commercialism that has alarmed the world—and also for the tolerance, the sympathy, and broad views and the generous conceptions that are the basis and groundwork of humor the world over.

To take a concrete example: there seems to be a good deal of truth in the statement that Abraham Lincoln was a typical American; and a number of biographies have been written to prove it. These volumes deal with the events, the troubles, the doubts, the difficulties, the confusion of conflicting interests, the perplexities of the hour, the passions and the prejudices that swarmed about him, and they are exceedingly interesting in and of themselves; but not one of them presents the man as he was, and as the people conceived him to be. They knew perfectly well that the melancholy of which he was said to be the victim was merely the exaggeration of spectators, and that, at its worst, it was but the shadow of a deep-seated purpose—the gentle abstraction that shed a beautiful light on his desires, and that served as an exquisite foil for his humor. They knew that the sorrows from which he suffered merely sweetened his nature and strengthened his soul. It was his humor that was typical. In its exuberance, and in its apparent untimeliness—if we are to believe the reports of stupefied

and astonished dignity—it was essentially the humor of the common people, the people who have made the Republic what it is, and who will continue to mold its destiny.

It is well to believe in the social and commercial scheme of salvation which the American spirit has mapped out for itself; for, always and everywhere, it remains true to the ideals represented by the promoters and organizers of the Republic. The American whom it represents has had little time for the enjoyment of luxury, or for the cultivation of the extra trimmings and embroideries of refinement. He has always had much to do; business pursues him as he pursues business; and yet, after all is said, his salute and his "so-long" go as far as those of any man in the world. He has been compelled to reorganize his own social organization to meet the demands made possible and pressing by the results of a great civil war; he has been called on to refashion and, in some sort, extend the operation of his political affairs, in order that he may keep pace with a sort of world development that he has inaugurated. Not only has he been compelled to remold the hordes of refugees from old-world tyranny that have come to these shores, but it has been in the line of his trade and traffic to seize the crowns nearest at hand and deposit them in the trash-pile; and to-day he feels that he is but bending to the will of destiny in carrying liberty and ultimate self-government to new peoples in the far islands of the south seas.

There are those, of course, who enter bitter protest against the American's commercialism, his devotion to the projects of trade and material development; but, so long as he carries his humor into his business, all will be well. There are those, too, who are inclined to criticize his recent adventures in alien and unfriendly seas, declaring that these later exploits come dangerously near to committing the country to imperialism—

the imperialism of which Mr. Kipling is the laureate. But, if crowns can have their imperialism, with poets to back them, why may not freedom and independence, freedom and self-government, have their nobler imperialism? And why may not this imperialism of liberty reach out for new lands and new peoples on which to impose the blessings that we are fondly supposed to enjoy? Why may not the imperialism of self-government spread until it becomes not only epidemic and contagious but confluent? To venture the suggestion is not to get very far away from the Spirit that spoke so loudly in the poet's unbelieving ear.

It is intended that the selections to be found in these volumes shall have more than a passing and a particular interest. Rightly interpreted, they will answer many questions that have perplexed foreigners. First and foremost, men who can see their own weak points, and laugh at them more heartily than disinterested spectators, can be depended on not to wander far from their own ideals. In the light of his own humor, the American stands forth as the conqueror of circumstance, who has created for himself the most appalling responsibilities, which he undertakes and carries out with a wink and a nod, whistling a hymn or a rag-time tune, to show that he is neither weary nor down-hearted.

To the examples in prose and verse have been added specimens of the pictorial humor which has for some years engaged the attention of some of our brightest humorists.

Acknowledgment

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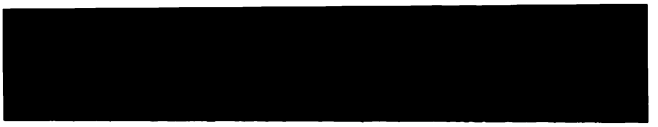
For "Who Paid for the Prima Donna?" from "Wensley and Other Stories," by EDMUND QUINCY; "An Aphorism and a Lecture," "Foreign Correspondence," "Music Pounding" (extract), "Dislikes" (short extracts), "The Wonderful One Horse Shay," "My Aunt," "The Ballad of the Oysterman," "The Height of the Ridiculous," "A Walk with the Schoolmistress," by O. W. HOLMES; "The Minister's Wooing,' by HARRIET BEECHER STOWE; "The British Matron," from "Lemington Spa," "Dr. Heidegger's Experiment," from "Twice Told Tales," "Mr. Higginbotham's Catastrophe," from "Twice Told Tales," by NATHANIEL HAWTHORNE.



American Wit and Humor

American Wit and Humor

Benjamin Franklin

Poor Richard to the "Courteous Reader"

Courteous Reader: I have heard that nothing gives an author so great pleasure as to find his works respectfully quoted by other learned authors. This pleasure I have seldom enjoyed. For though I have been, if I may say it without vanity, an *eminent* author of *Almanacks* annually, now for a full quarter of a century, my brother authors in the same way, for what reason I know not, have ever been very sparing in their applauses; and no other author has taken the least notice of me; so that did not my writings produce me some solid pudding, the great deficiency of praise would have quite discouraged me.

I concluded at length, that the people were the best judges of my merit; for they buy my works; and besides, in my rambles, where I am not personally known, I have frequently heard one or other of my adages repeated, with *as Poor Richard says* at the end of it. This gave me some satisfaction, as it showed, not only that my instructions were regarded, but discovered likewise some respect for my authority; and I own, that to encourage the practise of remembering and repeating those sentences, I have sometimes quoted myself with great gravity.

Judge, then, how much I must have been gratified by an incident I am going to relate to you. I stopped my horse lately where a great number of people were collected at a vendue of merchant's goods. The hour of sale not being come, they were conversing on the badness of the times; and one of the company called to a plain, clean old man with white

locks, "Pray, Father Abraham, what think you of the times? Won't these heavy taxes quite ruin the country? How shall we ever be able to pay them? What would you advise us to?" Father Abraham stood up and replied: "If you would have my advice, I will give it you in short; for *A word to the wise is enough*, and *Many words won't fill a bushel*, as Poor Richard says." They all joined, desiring him to speak his mind, and gathering round him, he proceeded as follows:

Friends, says he, and neighbors, the taxes are indeed very heavy, and if those laid on by the government were the only ones we had to pay, we might the more easily discharge them; but we have many others, and much more grievous to some of us. We are taxed twice as much by our IDLENESS, three times as much by our PRIDE, and four times as much by our FOLLY; and from these taxes the commissioners cannot ease or deliver us, by allowing an abatement. However, let us hearken to good advice, and something may be done for us; *God helps them that help themselves*, as Poor Richard says in his *Almanack* of 1733.

It would be thought a hard government that should tax its people one-tenth part of their TIME, to be employed in its service, but idleness taxes many of us much more, if we reckon all that is spent in absolute sloth, or doing of nothing; with that which is spent in idle employments or amusements that amount to nothing. Sloth, by bringing on diseases, absolutely shortens life. *Sloth, like rust, consumes faster than labor wears; while the used key is always bright*, as Poor Richard says. *But dost thou love life? then do not squander time, for that's the stuff life is made of*, as Poor Richard says.

How much more than is necessary do we spend in sleep? forgetting, that *the sleeping fox catches no poultry*, and that *there will be sleeping enough in the grave*, as Poor Richard says.

If time be of all things the most precious, *wasting of time must be,* as Poor Richard says, *the greatest prodigality;* since, as he elsewhere tells us, *lost time is never found again;* and what we call *time enough! always proves little enough.* Let us then up and be doing, and doing to the purpose; so, by diligence, shall we do more with less perplexity. *Sloth makes all things difficult, but industry all things easy,* as Poor Richard says; and *He that riseth late must trot all day, and shall scarce overtake his business at night; while laziness travels so slowly that Poverty soon overtakes him,* as we read in Poor Richard; who adds, *Drive thy business! let not that drive thee! and—*

Early to bed and early to rise
Makes a man healthy, wealthy, and wise.

So what signifies *wishing* and *hoping* for better times? We may make these times better, if we bestir ourselves. *Industry need not wish,* as Poor Richard says, and *He that lives on hope will die fasting. There are no gains without pains; then help, hands! for I have no lands;* or, if I have, they are smartly taxed. And, as Poor Richard likewise observes, *He that hath a trade hath an estate, and he that hath a calling hath an office of profit and honor;* but then the trade must be worked at, and the calling well followed, or neither the estate nor the office will enable us to pay our taxes. If we are industrious we shall never starve; for, as Poor Richard says, *At the working man's house hunger looks in, but dares not enter.* Nor will the bailiff or the constable enter, for *Industry pays debts, while despair increaseth them.*

What though you have found no treasure, nor has any rich relation left you a legacy, *Diligence is the mother of good luck,* as Poor Richard says, *and God gives all things to industry.*

Then plow deep while sluggards sleep,
And you shall have corn to sell and to keep,

says Poor Dick. Work while it is called to-day, for you know not how much you may be hindered to-morrow; which makes Poor Richard say, *One to-day is worth two to-morrows;* and farther, *Have you somewhat to do to-morrow? Do it to-day!*

If you were a servant, would you not be ashamed that a good master should catch you idle? Are you then your own master? *Be ashamed to catch yourself idle*, as Poor Dick says. When there is so much to be done for yourself, your family, your country, and your gracious king, be up by peep of day! *Let not the sun look down and say, "Inglorious here he lies!"* Handle your tools without mittens! remember that *The cat in gloves catches no mice!* as Poor Richard says.

'Tis true there is much to be done, and perhaps you are weak-handed; but stick to it steadily, and you will see great effects; for *Constant dropping wears away stones;* and *By diligence and patience the mouse ate in two the cable;* and *Little strokes fell great oaks;* as Poor Richard says in his *Almanack*, the year I cannot just now remember.

Methinks I hear some of you say, "Must a man afford himself no leisure?" I will tell thee, my friend, what Poor Richard says, *Employ thy time well, if thou meanest to gain leisure;* and *Since thou art not sure of a minute, throw not away an hour!* Leisure is time for doing something useful; this leisure the diligent man will obtain, but the lazy man never; so that, as Poor Richard says, *A life of leisure and a life of laziness are two things.* Do you imagine that sloth will afford you more comfort than labor? No! for, as Poor Richard says, *Trouble springs from idleness, and grievous toil from needless ease. Many, without labor, would live by their wits only, but they'll*

break for want of stock [i.e., capital]; whereas industry gives comfort, and plenty, and respect. *Fly pleasures, and they'll follow you. The diligent spinner has a large shift;* and—

Now I have a sheep and a cow,
Everybody bids me good morrow.

All which is well said by poor Richard. But with our industry we must likewise be steady, settled, and careful, and oversee our own affairs *with our own eyes*, and not trust too much to others; for, as Poor Richard says—

I never saw an oft-removed tree
Nor yet an oft-removed family
That throve so well as those that settled be.

And again, *Three removes are as bad as a fire;* and again, *Keep thy shop, and thy shop will keep thee;* and again, *If you would have your business done, go; if not, send.* And again—

He that by the plow would thrive,
Himself must either hold or drive.

And again, *The eye of the master will do more work than both his hands;* and again, *Want of care does us more damage than want of knowledge;* and again, *Not to oversee workmen is to leave them your purse open.*

Trusting too much to others' care is the ruin of many; for, as the *Almanack* says, *In the affairs of this world men are saved, not by faith, but by the want of it;* but a man's own care is profitable; for saith Poor Dick, *Learning is to the studious, and Riches to the careful;* as well as, *Power to the bold*, and *Heaven to the virtuous.* And further, *If you would have a faithful servant, and one that you like, serve yourself.*

And again, he adviseth to circumspection and care, even in the smallest matters; because sometimes, *A little neglect may breed great mischief;* adding, *for want of a nail the shoe was lost; for want of a shoe, the horse was lost; and for want of a horse the rider was lost;* being overtaken and slain by the enemy; all for want of a little care about a horseshoe nail!

So much for industry, my friends, and attention to one's own business; but to these we must add frugality, if we would make our industry more certainly successful. *A man may,* if he knows not how to save as he gets, *keep his nose all his life to the grindstone, and die not worth a groat at last. A fat kitchen makes a lean will,* as Poor Richard says; and—

Many estates are spent in the getting,
Since women for tea[1] *forsook spinning and knitting,*
And men for punch forsook hewing and splitting.

If you would be wealthy, says he in another *Almanack, Think of saving as well as of getting. The Indies have not made Spain rich; because her outgoes are greater than her incomes.*

Away, then, with your expensive follies, and you will not have so much cause to complain of hard times, heavy taxes, and chargeable families; for as Poor Dick says—

Women and wine, game and deceit,
Make the wealth small and the wants great.

And farther, *What maintains one vice would bring up two children.* You may think, perhaps, that a *little* tea, or a *little* punch now and then; a diet a *little* more costly; clothes a *little* finer; and a *little* more entertainment now and then, can be no great matter; but remember what Poor Richard says, *Many a*

[1] Tea at this time was a costly drink, and was regarded as a luxury.

little makes a mickle; and further, *Beware of little expenses; A small leak will sink a great ship;* and again—

Who dainties love, shall beggars prove;

and moreover, *Fools make feasts, and wise men eat them.*

Here are you all got together at this vendue of fineries and knick-knacks. You call them *goods;* but, if you do not take care, they will prove evils to some of you. You expect they will be sold cheap, and perhaps they may for less than they cost; but, if you have no occasion for them, they must be *dear* to you. Remember what Poor Richard says: *Buy what thou hast no need of, and erelong thou shalt sell thy necessaries.* And again, *At a great pennyworth pause a while.* He means, that perhaps the cheapness is apparent only, and not real; or the bargain by straitening thee in thy business, may do thee more harm than good. For in another place he says, *Many have been ruined by buying good pennyworths.*

Again, Poor Richard says, *'Tis foolish to lay out money in a purchase of repentance;* and yet this folly is practised every day at vendues for want of minding the *Almanack.*

Wise men, as Poor Richard says, *learn by others' harms; Fools, scarcely by their own;* but *Felix quem faciunt aliena pericula cautum.* Many a one, for the sake of finery on the back, has gone with a hungry belly, and half-starved their families. *Silks and satins, scarlets and velvets,* as Poor Richard says, *put out the kitchen fire.* These are not the necessaries of life; they can scarcely be called the conveniences; and yet, only because they look pretty, how many *want* to have them! The artificial wants of mankind thus become more numerous than the natural; and, as Poor Dick says, *For one* poor *person there are a hundred* indigent.

By these, and other extravagances, the genteel are reduced

to poverty, and forced to borrow of those whom they formerly despised, but who, through industry and frugality, have maintained their standing; in which case it appears plainly, that *A plowman on his legs is higher than a gentleman on his knees*, as Poor Richard says. Perhaps they have had a small estate left them, which they knew not the getting of; they think, *'Tis day, and will never be night;* that *a little to be spent out of so much is not worth minding* (*A child and a fool*, as Poor Richard says, *imagine* twenty shillings and twenty years can never be spent); but *Always taking out of the meal-tub, and never putting in, soon comes to the bottom.* Then, as Poor Dick says, *When the well's dry, they know the worth of water.* But this they might have known before, if they had taken his advice. *If you would know the value of money, go and try to borrow some;* for *He that goes a-borrowing, goes a-sorrowing*, and indeed so does he that lends to such people, *when he goes to get it in again.*

Poor Dick further advises, and says—

Fond pride of dress is, sure, a very curse;
Ere fancy you consult, consult your purse.

And again, *Pride is as loud a beggar as Want, and a great deal more saucy.* When you have bought one fine thing, you must buy ten more, that your appearance may be all of a piece; but Poor Dick says, *'Tis easier to suppress the first desire, than to satisfy all that follow it.* And 'tis as truly folly for the poor to ape the rich, as for the frog to swell in order to equal the ox.

Great estates may venture more,
But little boats should keep near shore.

'Tis, however, a folly soon punished; for, *Pride that dines on vanity sups on contempt*, as Poor Richard says. And in

another place, *Pride breakfasted with Plenty, dined with Poverty, and supped with Infamy.*

And after all, of what use is this pride of appearance, for which so much is risked, so much is suffered? It cannot promote health or ease pain; it makes no increase of merit in the person; it creates envy; it hastens misfortune.

What is a butterfly? At best
He's but a caterpillar drest,
The gaudy fop's his picture just,

as Poor Richard says.

But what madness must it be to *run into debt* for these superfluities! We are offered, by the terms of this vendue, six months' credit; and that, perhaps, has induced some of us to attend it, because we cannot spare the ready money, and hope now to be fine without it. But, ah! think what you do when you run in debt: *You give to another power over your liberty.* If you cannot pay at the time, you will be ashamed to see your creditor; you will be in fear when you speak to him; you will make poor, pitiful, sneaking excuses, and by degrees come to lose your veracity, and sink into base, downright lying; for, as Poor Richard says, *The second vice is lying, the first is running into debt;* and again, to the same purpose, *lying rides upon debt's back;* whereas a free-born Englishman ought not to be ashamed or afraid to see or speak to any man living. But poverty often deprives a man of all spirit and virtue. *'Tis hard for an empty bag to stand upright!* as Poor Richard truly says. What would you think of that prince, or the government, who should issue an edict forbidding you to dress like a gentleman or gentlewoman, on pain of imprisonment or servitude? Would you not say that you are free, have a right to dress as you please, and that such an edict would be a breach of your privileges, and

such a government tyrannical? And yet you are about to put yourself under such tyranny, when you run in debt for such dress! Your creditor has authority, at his pleasure, to deprive you of your liberty, by confining you in jail for life, or to sell you for a servant, if you should not be able to pay him. When you have got your bargain, you may, perhaps, think little of payment; but *Creditors* (Poor Richard tells us) *have better memories than debtors;* and in another place says, *Creditors are a superstitious set, great observers of set days and times.* The day comes round before you are aware, and the demand is made before you are prepared to satisfy it; or, if you bear your debt in mind, the term which at first seemed so long, will, as it lessens, appear extremely short. Time will seem to have added wings to his heels as well as his shoulders. *Those have a short Lent,* saith Poor Richard, *who owe money to be paid at Easter.* Then since, as he says, *The borrower is a slave to the lender, and the debtor to the creditor,* disdain the chain, preserve your freedom, and maintain your independency. Be *industrious* and *free;* be *frugal* and *free.* At present, perhaps, you may think yourself in thriving circumstances, and that you can bear a little extravagance without injury; but—

For age and want, save while you may,
No morning sun lasts a whole day.

As Poor Richard says, gain may be temporary and uncertain; but ever, while you live, expense is constant and certain; and *'Tis easier to build two chimneys than to keep one in fuel,* as Poor Richard says; so, *Rather go to bed supperless than rise in debt.*

Get what you can, and what you get hold;
'Tis the stone that will turn all your lead into gold,

as Poor Richard says; and, when you have got the Philosopher's stone, sure, you will no longer complain of bad times, or the difficulty of paying taxes.

This doctrine, my friends, is reason and wisdom; but, after all, do not depend too much upon your own industry and frugality and prudence, though excellent things; for they may all be blasted without the blessing of Heaven; and therefore, ask that blessing humbly, and be not uncharitable to those that at present seem to want it, but comfort and help them. Remember Job suffered, and was afterward prosperous.

And now, to conclude, *Experience keeps a dear school, but fools will learn in no other, and scarce in that;* for it is true, *We may give advice, but we cannot give conduct,* as Poor Richard says. However, remember this, *They that won't be counseled, can't be helped,* as Poor Richard says; and further, that, *If you will not hear reason, she'll surely rap your knuckles.*

Thus the old gentleman ended his harangue. The people heard it, and approved the doctrine; and immediately practised the contrary, just as if it had been a common sermon. For the vendue opened, and they began to buy extravagantly, notwithstanding all his cautions, and their own fear of taxes. I found the good man had thoroughly studied my *Almanacks,* and digested all I had dropped on those topics during the course of five-and-twenty years. The frequent mention he made of me must have tired any one else; but my vanity was wonderfully delighted with it, though I was conscious that not a tenth part of the wisdom was my own which he ascribed to me, but rather the gleanings that I had made of the sense of all ages and nations. However, I resolved to be the better for the echo of it; and, though I had at first determined to buy stuff for a new coat, I went away resolved to wear my old one a little

longer. Reader, if thou wilt do the same, *thy* profit will be as great as mine. I am, as ever, thine to serve thee,

RICHARD SAUNDERS.

July 7, 1757.

—"*Poor Richard's Almanack.*"

The Whistle[1]

I RECEIVED my dear friend's two letters, one for Wednesday, one for Saturday. This is again Wednesday. I do not deserve one for to-day, because I have not answered the former. But, indolent as I am, and averse to writing, the fear of having no more of your pleasing epistles if I do not contribute to the correspondence, obliges me to take up my pen; and as Mr. B. has kindly sent me word that he sets out to-morrow to see you, instead of spending this Wednesday evening, as I have done its namesakes, in your delightful company, I sit down to spend it in thinking of you, in writing to you, and in thinking over and over again your letters.

I am charmed with your description of Paradise, and with your plan of living there; and I approve much of your conclusion, that in the meantime we should draw all the good we can from this world. In my opinion, we might all draw more good from it than we do, and suffer less evils, if we would take care not to give too much for *whistles*. For to me it seems that most of the unhappy people we meet with are become so by neglect of that caution.

You ask what I mean? You love stories, and will excuse my telling one of myself.

[1] This little skit was sent by Franklin to one of his friends, Madame Brillon of Passey.

Benjamin Franklin

When I was a child of seven years old, my friends on a holiday filled my pocket with coppers. I went directly to a shop where they sold toys for children; and, being charmed with the sound of a *whistle* that I met by the way in the hands of another boy, I voluntarily offered and gave all my money for one. I then came home, and went whistling all over the house, much pleased with my *whistle*, but disturbing all the family. My brothers and sisters and cousins, understanding the bargain I had made, told me I had given four times as much for it as it was worth; put me in mind what good things I might have bought with the rest of the money, and laughed at me so much for my folly, that I cried with vexation; and the reflection gave me more chagrin than the *whistle* gave me pleasure.

This, however, was afterward of use to me, the impression continuing on my mind, so that often, when I was tempted to buy some unnecessary thing, I said to myself, *Don't give too much for the whistle:* and I saved my money.

As I grew up, came into the world, and observed the actions of men, I thought I met with many, very many, who *gave too much for the whistle.*

When I saw one too ambitious to court favor, sacrificing his time in attendance on levees, his repose, his liberty, his virtue, and perhaps his friends, to attain it, I have said to myself, *This man gives too much for his whistle.*

When I saw another fond of popularity, constantly employing himself in political bustles, neglecting his own affairs and ruining them by that neglect, *He pays, indeed,* said I, *too much for his whistle.*

If I knew a miser, who gave up any kind of a comfortable living, all the pleasure of doing good to others, all the esteem of his fellow-citizens, and the joys of benevolent friendship,

for the sake of accumulating wealth, *Poor man*, said I, *you pay too much for your whistle.*

When I met with a man of pleasure, sacrificing every laudable improvement of the mind, or of his fortune, to mere corporal sensations, and ruining his health in their pursuit, *Mistaken man*, said I, *you are providing pain for yourself instead of pleasure; you give too much for your whistle.*

If I see one fond of appearance, or fine clothes, fine houses, fine furniture, fine equipages, all above his fortune, for which he contracts debts, and ends his career in a prison, *Alas!* say I, *he has paid dear, very dear, for his whistle.*

When I see a beautiful, sweet-tempered girl married to an ill-natured brute of a husband, *What a pity*, say I, *that she should pay so much for a whistle!*

In short, I conceive that great part of the miseries of mankind are brought upon them by the false estimates they have made of the value of things, and by their *giving too much for their whistles.*

Yet I ought to have charity for these unhappy people, when I consider, that with all this wisdom of which I am boasting, there are certain things in the world so tempting, for example, the apples of King John, which happily are not to be bought; for if they were put up to sale by auction, I might very easily be led to ruin myself in the purchase, and find that I had once more given too much for the *whistle.*

Adieu, my dear friend, and believe me ever yours, very sincerely and with unalterable affection. B. FRANKLIN.

Benjamin Franklin

Dialogue Between Franklin and the Gout

MIDNIGHT, *October 22*, 1780.

Franklin. Eh! oh! eh! What have I done to merit these cruel sufferings?

Gout. Many things: you have ate and drank too freely, and too much indulged those legs of yours in their indolence.

Franklin. Who is it that accuses me?

Gout. It is I, even I, the Gout.

Franklin. What! my enemy in person?

Gout. No, not your enemy.

Franklin. I repeat it: my enemy; for you would not only torment my body to death, but ruin my good name; you reproach me as a glutton and a tippler; now all the world, that knows me, will allow that I am neither the one nor the other.

Gout. The world may think as it pleases; it is always very complaisant to itself, and sometimes to its friends; but I very well know that the quantity of meat and drink proper for a man who takes a reasonable degree of exercise, would be too much for another who never takes any.

Franklin. I take—eh! oh!—as much exercise—eh!—as I can, Madam Gout. You know my sedentary state, and on that account, it would seem, Madam Gout, as if you might spare me a little, seeing it is not altogether my own fault.

Gout. Not a jot; your rhetoric and your politeness are thrown away; your apology avails nothing. If your situation in life is a sedentary one, your amusements, your recreations, at least, should be active. You ought to walk or ride,

or if the weather prevents that, play at billiards. But let us examine your course of life. While the mornings are long, and you have leisure to go abroad, what do you do? Why, instead of gaining an appetite for breakfast by salutary exercise, you amuse yourself with books, pamphlets, or newspapers, which commonly are not worth the reading. Yet you eat an inordinate breakfast—four dishes of tea, with cream, and one or two buttered toasts, with slices of hung beef, which, I fancy, are not things the most easily digested. Immediately afterward you sit down to write at your desk, or converse with persons who apply to you on business. Thus the time passes till one, without any kind of bodily exercise. But all this I could pardon, in regard, as you say, to your sedentary condition. But what is your practise after dinner? Walking in the beautiful gardens of those friends with whom you have dined, would be the choice of a man of sense; yours is to be fixed down to chess, where you are found engaged for two or three hours! This is your perpetual recreation, which is the least eligible of any for a sedentary man, because, instead of accelerating the motion of the fluids, the rigid attention it requires helps to retard the circulation and obstruct internal secretions. Wrapt in the speculations of this wretched game, you destroy your constitution. What can be expected from such a course of living, but a body replete with stagnant humors, ready to fall a prey to all kinds of dangerous maladies, if I, the Gout, did not occasionally bring you relief by agitating those humors, and so purifying or dissipating them? If it was in some nook or alley in Paris, deprived of walks, that you played awhile at chess after dinner, this might be excusable; but the same taste prevails with you in Passy, Auteuil, Montmartre, or Savoy—places where there are the finest gardens and walks, a pure air, beautiful women, and

most agreeable and instructive conversation; all of which you might enjoy by frequenting the walks. But these are rejected for this abominable game of chess. Fie, then, Mr. Franklin! But, amidst my instructions, I had almost forgot to administer my wholesome corrections; so take that twinge —and that!

Franklin. Oh! eh! oh! ohhh! As much instruction as you please, Madam Gout, and as many reproaches; but pray, madam, a truce with your corrections!

Gout. No, sir, no: I will not abate a particle of what is so much for your good—therefore——

Franklin. Oh! ehhh! It is not fair to say I take no exercise, when I do very often, going out to dine, and returning in my carriage.

Gout. That, of all imaginable exercises, is the most slight and insignificant, if you allude to the motion of a carriage suspended on springs. By observing the degree of heat obtained by different kinds of motion, we may form an estimate of the quantity of exercise given by each. Thus, for example, if you turn out to walk in winter with cold feet, in an hour's time you will be in a glow all over; ride on horseback, the same effect will scarcely be perceived by four hours' round trotting; but if you loll in a carriage, such as you have mentioned, you may travel all day, and gladly enter the last inn to warm your feet by the fire. Flatter yourself then no longer, that half an hour's airing in your carriage deserves the name of exercise. Providence has appointed few to roll in carriages, while he has given to all a pair of legs, which are machines infinitely more commodious and serviceable. Be grateful, then, and make a proper use of yours. Would you know how they forward the circulation of your fluids, in the very action of transporting you from place to place: observe, when you

walk, that all your weight is alternately thrown from one leg to the other; this occasions a great pressure on the vessels of the foot, and repels their contents; when relieved, by the weight of being thrown on the other foot, the vessels of the first are allowed to replenish, and, by a return of this weight, this repulsion again succeeds; thus accelerating the circulation of the blood. The heat produced in any given time depends on the degree of this acceleration; the fluids are shaken, the humors alternated, the secretions facilitated, and all goes well; the cheeks are ruddy, and health is established. Behold your fair friend at Auteuil;[1] a lady who received from bounteous nature more really useful science than half a dozen such pretenders to philosophy as you have been able to extract from all your books. When she honors you with a visit, it is on foot. She walks all hours of the day, and leaves indolence and its concomitant maladies to be endured by her horses. In this see at once the preservative of her health and personal charms. But when you go to Auteuil, you must have your carriage, though it is no further from Passy to Auteuil than from Auteuil to Passy.

Franklin. Your reasonings grow very tiresome.

Gout. I stand corrected. I will be silent and continue my office; take that, and that.

Franklin. Oh! ohh! Talk on, I pray you!

Gout. No, no; I have a good number of twinges for you to-night, and you may be sure of some more to-morrow.

Franklin. What, with such a fever! I shall go distracted. Oh! eh! Can no one bear it for me?

Gout. Ask that of your horses; they have served you faithfully.

Franklin. How can you so cruelly sport with my torments?

[1] Madame Helvetius.

Gout. Sport! I am very serious. I have here a list of offenses against your own health distinctly written, and can justify every stroke inflicted on you.

Franklin. Read it, then.

Gout. It is too long a detail; but I will briefly mention some particulars.

Franklin. Proceed. I am all attention.

Gout. Do you remember how often you have promised yourself, the following morning, a walk in the grove of Bologne, in the Garden de la Muette, or in your own garden, and have violated your promise, alleging at one time it was too cold, at another too warm, too windy, too moist, or what else you pleased; when in truth it was too nothing but your inseparable love of ease?

Franklin. That, I confess, may have happened occasionally; probably ten times in a year.

Gout. Your confession is very far short of the truth; the gross amount is one hundred and ninety-nine times.

Franklin. Is it possible?

Gout. So possible that it is fact; you may rely on the accuracy of my statement. You know M. Brillon's gardens, and what fine walks they contain; you know the handsome flight of an hundred steps, which lead from the terrace above to the lawn below. You have been in the practise of visiting this amiable family twice a week after dinner, and it is a maxim of your own, that "a man may take as much exercise in walking a mile, up and down stairs, as in ten on level ground." What an opportunity was here for you to have had exercise in both these ways! Did you embrace it, and how often?

Franklin. I cannot immediately answer that question.

Gout. I will do it for you. Not once.

Franklin. Not once?

Gout. Even so. During the summer you went there at six o'clock. You found the charming lady with her lovely children and friends, eager to walk with you and entertain you with their agreeable conversation; and what has been your choice? Why, to sit on the terrace, satisfy yourself with the fine prospect, and passing your eye over the beauties of the garden below, without taking one step to descend and walk about in them. On the contrary, you call for tea and the chess-board; and lo! you are occupied in your seat till nine o'clock, and that besides two hours' play after dinner; and then, instead of walking home, which would have bestirred you a little, you step into your carriage. How absurd to suppose that all this carelessness can be reconcilable with health, without my interposition!

Franklin. I am convinced now of the justness of Poor Richard's remark, that "Our debts and our sins are always greater than we think for."

Gout. So it is. You philosophers are sages in your maxims, and fools in your conduct.

Franklin. But do you charge among my crimes that I return in a carriage from M. Brillon's?

Gout. Certainly; for, having been seated all the while, you cannot object the fatigue of the day, and cannot want, therefore, the relief of a carriage.

Franklin. What, then, would you have me do with my carriage?

Gout. Burn it if you choose: you would at least get heat out of it once in this way; or, if you dislike that proposal, here's another for you: observe the poor peasants, who work in the vineyards and grounds about the villages of Passy, Auteuil, Chaillot, etc., you may find every day among these deserving creatures, four or five old men and women, bent and

perhaps crippled by weight of years and too long and too great labor. After a most fatiguing day, these people have to trudge a mile or two to their smoky huts. Order your coachman to set them down. This is an act that will be good for your soul; and at the same time after your visit to the Brillons, if you return on foot, that will be good for your body.

Franklin. Ah! how tiresome you are!

Gout. Well, then, to my office; it should not be forgotten that I am your physician. There!

Franklin. Oh-h-h! What a devil of a physician!

Gout. How ungrateful you are to say so! Is it not I who, in the character of your physician, have saved you from the palsy, dropsy, and apoplexy? one or other of which would have done for you long ago, but for me.

Franklin. I submit, and thank you for the past, but entreat the discontinuance of your visits for the future; for, in my mind, one had better die than be cured so dolefully. Permit me just to hint, that I have also not been unfriendly to you. I never feed physician or quack of any kind, to enter the list against you; if then you do not leave me to my repose, it may be said you are ungrateful too.

Gout. I can scarcely acknowledge that as an objection. As to quacks, I despise them; they may kill you indeed, but cannot injure me. And, as to regular physicians, they are at last convinced that the gout, in such a subject as you are, is no disease, but a remedy; and wherefore cure a remedy? But to our business; there!

Franklin. Oh! oh! for Heaven's sake leave me, and I promise faithfully never more to play at chess, but to take exercise daily and live temperately.

Gout. I know you too well. You promise fair; but after a few months of good health you will return to your old habits;

your fine promises will be forgotten like the forms of the last year's clouds. Let us then finish the account, and I will go. But I leave you with an assurance of visiting you again at a proper time and place; for my object is your good, and you are sensible now that I am your *real friend.*

Friends and Acquaintances

At New York I found my friend Collins, who had arrived there some time before me. We had been intimate from children, and had read the same books together; but he had the advantage of more time for reading and studying, and a wonderful genius for mathematical learning, in which he far outstripped me. While I lived in Boston, most of my hours of leisure for conversation were spent with him, and he continued a sober as well as an industrious lad; was much respected for his learning by several of the clergy and other gentlemen, and seemed to promise making a good figure in life. But, during my absence, he had acquired a habit of sotting with brandy; and I found by his own account, and what I heard from others, that he had been drunk every day since his arrival at New York, and behaved very oddly. He had gamed, too, and lost his money, so that I was obliged to discharge his lodgings, and defray his expenses to and at Philadelphia, which proved extremely inconvenient to me.

The then governor of New York, Burnet (son of Bishop Burnet), hearing from the captain that a young man, one of his passengers, had a great many books, desired he would bring me to see him. I waited upon him accordingly, and should have taken Collins with me but that he was not sober. The governor treated me with great civility, showed me his

library, which was a very large one, and we had a good deal of conversation about books and authors. This was the second governor who had done me the honor to take notice of me; which, to a poor boy like me, was very pleasing.

We proceeded to Philadelphia. I received on the way Vernon's money, without which we could hardly have finished our journey. Collins wished to be employed in some counting-house; but, whether they discovered his dramming by his breath, or by his behaviour, though he had some recommendations, he met with no success in any application, and continued lodging and boarding at the same house with me, and at my expense. Knowing I had that money of Vernon's he was continually borrowing of me, still promising repayment as soon as he should be in business. At length he had got so much of it that I was distressed to think what I should do in case of being called on to remit it.

His drinking continued, about which we sometimes quarreled; for, when a little intoxicated, he was very fractious. Once, in a boat on the Delaware with some other young men, he refused to row in his turn. "I will be rowed home," says he. "We will not row you," says I. "You must, or stay all night on the water," says he, "just as you please." The others said, "Let us row; what signifies it?" But, my mind being soured with his other conduct, I continued to refuse. So he swore he would make me row, or throw me overboard; and coming along, stepping on the thwarts, toward me, when he came up and struck at me, I clapped my hand under his crotch, and, rising, pitched him head-foremost into the river. I knew he was a good swimmer, and so was under little concern about him; but before he could get round to lay hold of the boat, we had with a few strokes pulled her out of his reach; and ever when he drew near the boat, we asked if he would row,

striking a few strokes to slide her away from him. He was ready to die with vexation, and obstinately would not promise to row. However, seeing him at last beginning to tire, we lifted him in and brought him home dripping wet in the evening. We hardly exchanged a civil word afterward, and a West India captain, who had a commission to procure a tutor for the sons of a gentleman at Barbadoes, happening to meet with him, agreed to carry him thither. He left me then, promising to remit me the first money he should receive in order to discharge the debt; but I never heard of him after.

The breaking into this money of Vernon's was one of the first great errata of my life; and this affair showed that my father was not much out in his judgment when he supposed me too young to manage business of importance. But Sir William, on reading his letter, said he was too prudent. There was great difference in persons; and discretion did not always accompany years, nor was youth always without it. "And since he will not set you up," says he, "I will do it myself. Give me an inventory of the things necessary to be had from England, and I will send for them. You shall repay me when you are able; I am resolved to have a good printer here, and I am sure you must succeed." This was spoken with such an appearance of cordiality that I had not the least doubt of his meaning what he said. I had hitherto kept the proposition of my setting up a secret in Philadelphia, and I still kept it. Had it been known that I depended on the governor, probably some friend, that knew him better, would have advised me not to rely on him, as I afterward heard it as his known character to be liberal of promises which he never meant to keep. Yet, unsolicited as he was by me, how could I think his generous offers insincere? I believed him one of the best men in the world.

I presented him an inventory of a little printing-house,

amounting by my computation to about one hundred pounds sterling. He liked it, but asked me if my being on the spot in England to choose the types, and see that everything was good of the kind, might not be of some advantage. "Then," says he, "when there, you may make acquaintances, and establish correspondences in the book-selling and stationery way." I agreed that this might be advantageous. "Then," says he, "get yourself ready to go with *Annis*," which was the annual ship, and the only one at that time usually passing between London and Philadelphia. But it would be some months before *Annis* sailed, so I continued working with Keimer, fretting about the money Collins had got from me, and in daily apprehensions of being called upon by Vernon, which, however, did not happen for some years after.

I believe I have omitted mentioning that, in my first voyage from Boston, being becalmed off Block Island, our people set about catching cod, and hauled up a great many. Hitherto I had stuck to my resolution of not eating animal food, and on this occasion I considered, with my master Tryon, the taking every fish as a kind of unprovoked murder, since none of them had, or ever could do us any injury that might justify the slaughter. All this seemed very reasonable. But I had formerly been a great lover of fish, and, when this came hot out of the frying-pan, it smelt admirably well. I balanced some time between principle and inclination, till I recollected that, when the fish were opened, I saw smaller fish taken out of their stomachs; then thought I, "If you eat one another, I don't see why we mayn't eat you." So I dined upon cod very heartily, and continued to eat with other people, returning only now and then occasionally to a vegetable diet. So convenient a thing it is to be a *reasonable creature*, since it enables one to find or make a reason for everything one has a mind to do.

Keimer and I lived on a pretty good familiar footing, and agreed tolerably well, for he suspected nothing of my setting up. He retained a great deal of his old enthusiasm and loved argumentation. We therefore had many disputations. I used to work him so with my Socratic method, and trepanned him so often by questions apparently so distant from any point we had in hand, and yet by degrees led to the point, and brought him into difficulties and contradictions, that at last he grew ridiculously cautious, and would hardly answer me the most common question, without asking first, "*What do you intend to infer from that?*" However, it gave him so high an opinion of my abilities in the confuting way, that he seriously proposed my being his colleague in a project he had of setting up a new sect. He was to preach the doctrines, and I was to confound all opponents. When he came to explain with me upon the doctrines, I found several conundrums which I objected to, unless I might have my way a little too, and introduce some of mine.

Keimer wore his beard at full length, because somewhere in the Mosaic law it is said, "*Thou shalt not mar the corners of thy beard.*" He likewise kept the Seventh day, Sabbath; and these two points were essentials with him. I disliked both; but agreed to admit them upon condition of his adopting the doctrine of using no animal food. "I doubt," said he, "my constitution will not bear that." I assured him it would, and that he would be the better for it. He was usually a great glutton, and I promised myself some diversion in half starving him. He agreed to try the practise, if I would keep him company. I did so, and we held it for three months. We had our victuals dressed, and brought to us regularly by a woman in the neighborhood, who had from me a list of forty dishes, to be prepared for us at different times, in all of which

there was neither fish, flesh, nor fowl, and the whim suited me the better at this time from the cheapness of it, not costing us above eighteen pence sterling each per week. I have since kept several Lents most strictly, leaving the common diet for that and that for the common, abruptly without the least inconvenience, so that I think that there is little in the advice of making those changes by easy gradations. I went on pleasantly, but poor Keimer suffered grievously, tired of the project, longed for the flesh-pots of Egypt, and ordered a roast pig. He invited me and two women friends to dine with him; but, it being too soon upon the table, he could not resist the temptation, and ate the whole before we came. . . .

My chief acquaintances at this time were Charles Osborne, Joseph Watson, and James Ralph, all lovers of reading. The two first were clerks to an eminent scrivener or conveyancer in the town, Charles Brogden; the other was clerk to a merchant. Watson was a pious, sensible young man, of great integrity; the others rather more lax in their principles of religion, particularly Ralph, who as well as Collins, had been unsettled by me, for which they both made me suffer. Osborne was sensible, candid, frank; sincere and affectionate to his friends; but in literary matters, too fond of criticizing. Ralph was ingenious, genteel in his manners, and extremely eloquent; I think I never knew a prettier talker. Both of them great admirers of poetry, and began to try their hands in little pieces. Many pleasant walks we four had together on Sundays into the woods, near Schuylkill, where we read to one another, and conferred on what we read.

Ralph was inclined to pursue the study of poetry, not doubting but he might become eminent in it and make his fortune by it, alleging that the best poets must, when they first began to write, make as many faults as he did. Osborne dissuaded

him, assured him he had no genius for poetry, and advised him to think of nothing beyond the business he was bred to; that in the mercantile way, though he had no stock, he might by his diligence and punctuality recommend himself to employment as a factor, and in time acquire wherewith to trade on his own account. I approved the amusing one's self with poetry now and then, so far as to improve one's language, but no further.

On this it was proposed that we should each of us, at our next meeting, produce a piece of our own composing, in order to improve by our mutual observations, criticisms, and corrections. As language and expression were what we had in view, we excluded all considerations of invention by agreeing that the task should be a version of the eighteenth Psalm, which describes the descent of a Deity. When the time of our meeting drew nigh, Ralph called on me first, and let me know his piece was ready. I told him I had been busy, and having little inclination, had done nothing. He then showed me his piece for my opinion, and I much approved it, as it appeared to me to have great merit. "Now," says he, "Osborne never will allow the least merit in anything of mine, but makes a thousand criticisms out of mere envy. He is not so jealous of you; I wish, therefore, you would take this piece, and produce it as yours; I will pretend not to have had time, and so produce nothing. We shall then see what he will say to it." It was agreed, and I immediately transcribed it, that it might appear in my own hand.

We met; Watson's performance was read; there were some beauties in it, but many defects. Osborne's was read; it was much better; Ralph did it justice; remarked some faults, but applauded the beauties. He himself had nothing to produce. I was backward; seemed desirous of being excused; had not had sufficient time to correct, etc.; but no excuse could be ad-

mitted; produce I must. It was read and repeated; Watson and Osborne gave up the contest, and joined in applauding it. Ralph only made some criticisms, and proposed some amendments; but I defended my text. Osborne was against Ralph, and told him he was no better a critic than poet, so he dropped the argument. As they two went home together, Osborne expressed himself still more strongly in favor of what he thought my production; having restrained himself before, as he said, lest I should think it flattery. "But who would have imagined," said he, "that Franklin had been capable of such a performance; such painting, such force, such fire! He has even improved the original. In his common conversation he seems to have no choice of words; he hesitates and blunders; and yet, good God! how he writes!" When we next met, Ralph discovered the trick we had played him, and Osborne was a little laughed at.

This transaction fixed Ralph in his resolution of becoming a poet. I did all I could to dissuade him from it, but he continued scribbling verses till *Pope* cured him.[1] He became, however, a pretty good prose writer. More of him hereafter. But, as I may not have occasion again to mention the other two, I shall just remark here, that Watson died in my arms a few years after, much lamented, being the best of our set. Osborne went to the West Indies, where he became an eminent lawyer and made money, but died young. He and I had made a serious agreement, that the one who happened first to die should, if possible, make a friendly visit to the other, and acquaint him how he found things in that separate state. But he never fulfilled his promise.—"*Autobiography.*"

[1] "Silence, ye wolves! while Ralph to Cynthia howls,
And makes night hideous—answer him, ye owls."
—*Pope's "Dunciad."*

Franklin as a Teetotaler

At my first admission into this printing-house I took to working at press, imagining I felt a want of the bodily exercise I had been used to in America, where presswork is mixed with composing. I drank only water; the other workmen, near fifty in number, were great guzzlers of beer. On occasion, I carried up and down stairs a large form of types in each hand, when others carried but one in both hands. They wondered to see, from this and several instances, that the *Water-American*, as they called me, was *stronger* than themselves, who drank *strong* beer! We had an ale-house boy who attended always in the house to supply the workmen. My companion at the press drank every day a pint before breakfast, a pint at breakfast with his bread and cheese, a pint between breakfast and dinner, a pint at dinner, a pint in the afternoon about six o'clock, and another when he had done his day's work. I thought it a detestable custom; but it was necessary, he supposed, to drink *strong* beer, that he might be *strong* to labor. I endeavored to convince him that the bodily strength afforded by beer could only be in proportion to the grain or flour of the barley dissolved in the water of which it was made; that there was more flour in a pennyworth of bread; and therefore, if he would eat that with a pint of water, it would give him more strength than a quart of beer. He drank on, however, and had four or five shillings to pay out of his wages every Saturday night for that muddling liquor; an expense I was free from. And thus these poor devils keep themselves always under.

Watts, after some weeks, desiring to have me in the composing-room, I left the pressmen; a new *bien venu* or sum for drink, being five shillings, was demanded of me by the compositors. I thought it an imposition, as I had paid below; the master thought so too, and forbade my paying it. I stood out two or three weeks, was accordingly considered as an excommunicate, and had so many little pieces of private mischief done me, by mixing my sorts, transposing my pages, breaking my matter, etc., etc., if I were ever so little out of the room, and all ascribed to the chapel ghost, which they said ever haunted those not regularly admitted, that, notwithstanding the master's protection, I found myself obliged to comply and pay the money, convinced of the folly of being on ill terms with those one is to live with continually.

I was now on a fair footing with them, and soon acquired considerable influence. I proposed some reasonable alterations in their chapel laws, and carried them against all opposition. From my example, a great part of them left their muddling breakfast of beer, and bread, and cheese, finding they could, with me, be supplied from a neighboring house with a large porringer of hot water-gruel, sprinkled with pepper, crumbed with bread, and a bit of butter in it, for the price of a pint of beer, viz., three half-pence. This was a more comfortable as well as cheaper breakfast, and kept their heads clearer. Those who continued sotting with beer all day were often, by not paying, out of credit at the ale-house, and used to make interest with me to get beer; their *light*, as they phrased it, *being out*. I watched the pay-table on Saturday night, and collected what I stood engaged for them, having to pay sometimes near thirty shillings a week on their accounts. This, and my being esteemed a pretty good *riggite*, that is, a jocular, verbal satirist, supported my consequence in the society. My

constant attendance (I never making a St. Monday [1]) recommended me to the master; and my uncommon quickness at composing occasioned my being put upon all work of despatch, which was generally better paid. So I went on now very agreeably.—"*Autobiography.*"

Maxims

NEVER spare the parson's wine, nor the baker's pudding.

A house without woman or firelight is like a body without soul or sprite.

Kings and bears often worry their keepers.

Light purse, heavy heart.

He's a fool that makes his doctor his heir.

Ne'er take a wife till thou hast a house (and a fire) to put her in.

To lengthen thy life, lessen thy meals.

He that drinks fast pays slow.

He is ill-clothed who is bare of virtue.

Beware of meat twice boil'd, and an old foe reconcil'd.

The heart of a fool is in his mouth, but the mouth of a wise man is in his heart.

He that is rich need not live sparingly, and he that can live sparingly need not be rich.

He that waits upon fortune is never sure of a dinner.

[1] That is, never turning Monday into a holiday, as other workmen did, who, when paid Saturday night, squandered their earnings in drink and were good for nothing before Tuesday.

Benjamin Franklin

The Ephemera:

An Emblem of Human Life[1]

You may remember, my dear friend, that when we lately spent that happy day in the delightful garden and sweet society of the Moulin Joly, I stopped a little in one of our walks, and stayed some time behind the company. We had been shown numberless skeletons of a kind of little fly, called an ephemera, whose successive generations, we were told, were bred and expired within the day. I happened to see a living company of them on a leaf, who appeared to be engaged in conversation. You know I understand all the inferior animal tongues. My too great application to the study of them is the best excuse I can give for the little progress I have made in your charming language. I listened through curiosity to the discourse of these little creatures; but as they, in their national vivacity, spoke three or four together, I could make but little of their conversation. I found, however, by some broken expressions that I heard now and then, they were disputing warmly on the merit of two foreign musicians, one a *cousin*, the other a *moscheto;* in which dispute they spent their time, seemingly as regardless of the shortness of life as if they had been sure of living a month. Happy people! thought I; you are certainly under a wise, just, and mild government, since you have no public grievances to complain of, nor any subject of contention but the perfections and imperfections of foreign music. I turned my head from them to an old gray-headed one, who

[1] Written in 1778 to Madame Brillon.

was single on another leaf, and talking to himself. Being amused with his soliloquy, I put it down in writing, in hopes it will likewise amuse her to whom I am so much indebted for the most pleasing of all amusements, her delicious company and heavenly harmony.

"It was," said he, " the opinion of learned philosophers of our race, who lived and flourished long before my time, that this vast world, the Moulin Joly, could not itself subsist more than eighteen hours; and I think there was some foundation for that opinion, since, by the apparent motion of the great luminary that gives life to all nature, and which in my time has evidently declined considerably toward the ocean at the end of our earth, it must then finish its course, be extinguished in the waters that surround us, and leave the world in cold and darkness, necessarily producing universal death and destruction. I have lived seven of those hours, a great age, being no less than four hundred and twenty minutes of time. How very few of us continue so long! I have seen generations born, flourish, and expire. My present friends are the children and grandchildren of the friends of my youth, who are now, alas, no more! And I must soon follow them; for, by the course of nature, though still in health, I cannot expect to live above seven or eight minutes longer. What now avails all my toil and labor in amassing honey-dew on this leaf, which I cannot live to enjoy? What the political struggles I have been engaged in, for the good of my compatriot inhabitants of this bush, or my philosophical studies for the benefit of our race in general? for, in politics, what can laws do without morals? Our present race of ephemeræ will in a course of minutes become corrupt, like those of other and older bushes, and consequently as wretched. And in philosophy how small our progress! Alas! art is long, and life is short. My friends would comfort me with the idea

of a name, they say, I shall leave behind me; and they tell me I have lived long enough to nature and to glory. But what will fame be to an ephemera who no longer exists? And what will become of all history in the eighteenth hour, when the world itself, even the whole Moulin Joly, shall come to its end, and be buried in universal ruin?"

To me, after all my eager pursuits, no solid pleasures now remain but the reflection of a long life spent in meaning well, the sensible conversation of a few good lady ephemeræ, and now and then a kind smile and a tune from the ever amiable *Brillante.*

B. FRANKLIN.

Model of a Letter of Recommendation of a Person You are Unacquainted With

PARIS, *April* 2, 1777.

Sir: The bearer of this, who is going to America, presses me to give him a letter of recommendation, though I know nothing of him, not even his name. This may seem extraordinary, but I assure you it is not uncommon here. Sometimes, indeed, one unknown person brings another, equally unknown, to recommend him; and sometimes they recommend one another! As to this gentleman, I must refer you to himself for his character and merits, with which he is certainly better acquainted than I can possibly be. I recommend him, however, to those civilities which every stranger, of whom one knows no harm, has a right to; and I request you will do him all the favor that, on further acquaintance, you shall find him to deserve. I have the honor to be, etc.

To Miss Georgiana Shipley,

On the Loss of Her American Squirrel, who, Escaping from His Cage, was Killed by a Shepherd's Dog

LONDON, *September* 26, 1772.

DEAR MISS: I lament with you most sincerely the unfortunate end of poor Mungo. Few squirrels were better accomplished; for he had a good education, had traveled far, and seen much of the world. As he had the honor of being, for his virtues, your favorite, he should not go, like common skuggs, without an elegy or an epitaph. Let us give him one in the monumental style and measure, which, being neither prose nor verse, is perhaps the properest for grief; since to use common language would look as if we were not affected, and to make rhymes would seem trifling in sorrow.

Epitaph

Alas! poor Mungo!
Happy wert thou, hadst thou known
Thy own felicity.
Remote from the fierce bald eagle,
Tyrant of thy native woods,
Thou hadst nought to fear from his piercing talons,
Nor from the murdering gun
Of the thoughtless sportsman.

Safe in thy wired castle,
Grimalkin never could annoy thee.
Daily wert thou fed with the choicest viands,
By the fair hand of an indulgent mistress;

But, discontented,
Thou wouldst have more freedom.
Too soon, alas! didst thou obtain it;
And wandering,

Thou art fallen by the fangs of wanton, cruel Ranger!
Learn hence,
Ye who blindly seek more liberty,
Whether subjects, sons, squirrels, or daughters,
That apparent restraint may be real protection,
Yielding peace and plenty
With security.

You see, my dear Miss, how much more decent and proper this broken style is, than if we were to say, by way of epitaph,—

Here Skugg
Lies snug,
As a bug
In a rug.

And yet, perhaps, there are people in the world of so little feeling as to think that this would be a good enough epitaph for poor Mungo.

If you wish it, I shall procure another to succeed him; but perhaps you will now choose some other amusement.

Remember me affectionately to all the good family, and believe me ever your affectionate friend,

B. FRANKLIN.

Franklin at Versailles

A Letter to Miss Stevenson[1]

PARIS, *September* 14, 1767.

DEAR POLLY: I am always pleased with a letter from you, and I flatter myself you may be sometimes pleased in receiving one from me, though it should be of little importance, such as this, which is to consist of a few occasional remarks made here, and in my journey hither.

Soon after I left you in that agreeable society at Bromley, I took the resolution of making a trip with Sir John Pringle into France. We set out on the 28th past. All the way to Dover we were furnished with post-chaises, hung so as to lean forward, the top coming down over one's eyes, like a hood, as if to prevent one's seeing the country; which being one of my great pleasures, I was engaged in perpetual disputes with the innkeepers, hostlers, and postilions about getting the straps taken up a hole or two before and let down as much behind, they insisting that the chaise leaning forward was an ease to the horses, and that the contrary would kill them. I suppose the chaise leaning forward looks to them like a willingness to go forward, and that its hanging back shows reluctance. They added other reasons that were no reasons at all, and made me, as upon a hundred other occasions, almost wish that mankind had never been endowed with a reasoning faculty, since they know so little how to make use of it, and so often mislead them-

[1] A young friend of Franklin, the daughter of his landlady in London

selves by it, and that they had been furnished with a good sensible instinct instead of it.

At Dover, the next morning, we embarked for Calais with a number of passengers, who had never before been at sea. They would previously make a hearty breakfast, because if the wind should fail, we might not get over till supper time. Doubtless they thought, that when they had paid for their breakfast they had a right to it, and that when they had swallowed it they were sure of it. But they had scarce been out half an hour, before the sea laid claim to it, and they were obliged to deliver it up. So that it seems there are uncertainties, even beyond those between the cup and the lip. If ever you go to sea, take my advice and live sparingly a day or two beforehand. The sickness, if any, will be lighter and sooner over. We got to Calais that evening.

Various impositions we suffered from boatmen, porters, and the like, on both sides the water. I know not which are the most rapacious, the English or French; but the latter have, with their knavery, the most politeness.

The roads we found equally good with ours in England; in some places paved with smooth stones, like our new streets, for many miles together, and rows of trees on each side, and yet there are no turnpikes. But then poor peasants complained to us grievously that they were obliged to work upon the roads fully two months in the year, without being paid for their labor. Whether this is truth, or whether, like Englishmen, they grumble, cause or no cause, I have not yet been able to fully inform myself.

The women we saw at Calais, on the road, at Boulogne, and in the inns and villages, were generally of dark complexions; but arriving at Abbeville we found a sudden change, a multitude of both women and men in that place appearing re-

markably fair. Whether this is owing to a small colony of spinners, wool-combers, and weavers, brought hither from Holland with the woolen manufactory about sixty years ago, or to their being less exposed to the sun than in other places, their business keeping them much within doors, I know not. Perhaps, as in some other cases, different causes may club in producing the effect, but the effect itself is certain. Never was I in a place of greater industry, wheels and looms going in every house.

As soon as we left Abbeville, the swarthiness returned. I speak generally; for here are some fair women at Paris, who, I think, are not whitened by art. As to rouge, they don't pretend to imitate nature in laying it on. There is no gradual diminution of the color, from the full bloom in the middle of the cheek to the faint tint near the sides, nor does it show itself differently in different faces. I have not had the honor of being at any lady's toilette to see how it is laid on, but I fancy I can tell you how it is or may be done. Cut a hole of three inches in diameter in a piece of paper, place it on the side of your face in such a manner as that the top of the hole may be just under the eye, then with a brush dipped in the color, paint face and paper together; so when the paper is taken off, there will remain a round patch of red exactly the form of the hole. This is the mode, from the actresses on the stage upwards, through all ranks of ladies to the princesses of the blood; but it stops there, the queen not using it, having in the serenity, complacence, and benignity, that shine so eminently in or rather through her countenance, sufficient beauty though now an old woman, to do extremely well without it.

You see I speak of the queen[1] as if I had seen her; and so I have, for you must know I have been at court. We went to Ver-

[1] Wife of Louis XV.

sailles last Sunday, and had the honor of being presented to the king; he spoke to both of us very graciously and very cheerfully, is a handsome man, has a very lively look, and appears younger than he is. In the evening we were at the *Grand Concert*, where the family sup in public. The table was half a hollow square, the service gold. When either made a sign for drink, the word was given by one of the waiters. *A boir pour le Roi*, or *A boir pour la Reine.* Then two persons came from within, the one with wine and the other with water in *carafes;* each drank a little glass of what he brought, and then put both the *carafes* with a glass on a salver, and then presented it. Their distance from each other was such that other chairs might have been placed between any two of them. An officer of the court brought us up through the crowd of spectators, and placed Sir John so as to stand between the queen and Madame Victoire. The king talked a good deal to Sir John, asking many questions about our royal family, and did me too the honor of taking some notice of me; that is saying enough, for I would not have you think me so much pleased with this king and queen as to have a whit less regard than I used to have for ours. No Frenchman shall go beyond me in thinking my own king and queen the very best in the world, and the most amiable.

Versailles has had infinite sums laid out in building it and supplying it with water. Some say the expenses exceeded eighty millions sterling. The range of buildings is immense; the garden front most magnificent, all of hewn stone; the number of statues, figures, urns, etc., in marble and bronze of exquisite workmanship, is beyond conception. But the waterworks are out of repair, and so is great part of the front next the town, looking with its shabby, half-brick walls, and broken windows, not much better than the houses in Durham Yard.

There is, in short, both at Versailles and Paris, a prodigious mixture of magnificence and negligence, with every kind of elegance except that of cleanliness, and what we call tidiness: though I must do Paris the justice to say that in two points of cleanliness they exceed us. The water they drink, though from the river, they render as pure as that of the best spring, by filtering it through cisterns filled with sand; and the streets with constant sweeping are fit to walk in, though there is no paved footpath. Accordingly, many well-dressed people are constantly seen walking in them. The crowds of coaches and chairs for this reason is not so great. Men as well as women carry umbrellas in their hands, which they extend in case of rain or too much sun; and a man with an umbrella not taking up more than three foot square or nine square feet of the street, when, if in a coach, he would take up two hundred and forty square feet, you can easily conceive that though the streets here are narrow, they may be less encumbered. They are extremely well paved, and the stones, being generally cubes, when worn on one side, may be turned and become new.

The civilities we everywhere receive give us the strongest impressions of French politeness. It seems to be a point settled here universally that strangers are to be treated with respect; and one has just the same deference shown one here by being a stranger as in England by being a lady. The custom-house officers at Port St. Denis, as we entered Paris, were about to seize two dozen of excellent Bordeaux wine given us at Boulogne, and which we brought with us; but as soon as they found we were strangers, it was immediately remitted on that account. At the church of Notre Dame, where we went to see a magnificent illumination, with figures, etc., for the deceased dauphiness, we found an immense crowd, who were kept out by guards; but the officer being told that we were strangers from England,

he immediately admitted us, accompanied and showed us everything. Why don't we practise this urbanity to Frenchmen? Why should they be allowed to outdo us in anything?

Here is an exhibition of painting, like ours in London, to which multitudes flock daily. I am not connoisseur enough to judge which has most merit. Every night, Sundays not excepted, here are plays or operas; and though the weather has been hot, and the houses full, one is not incommoded by the heat so much as with us in winter. They must have some way of changing the air, that we are not acquainted with. I shall inquire into it.

Traveling is one way of lengthening life, at least in appearance. It is but about a fortnight since we left London, but the variety of scenes we have gone through makes it seem equal to six months living in one place. Perhaps I have suffered a greater change too, in my own person, than I have done in six years at home. I had not been here six days before my tailor and perruquier had transformed me into a Frenchman. Only think what a figure I make in a little bag-wig and with naked ears! They told me I was become twenty years younger, and looked very gallant.

This letter shall cost you a shilling, and you may consider it cheap when you reflect that it has cost me at least fifty guineas to get into the situation that enables me to write it.

Besides, I might, if I had stayed at home, have won perhaps two shillings of you at cribbage. By the way, now I mention cards, let me tell you that quadrille is now out of fashion here, and English whist all the mode at Paris and the court.

And pray look upon it as no small matter, that, surrounded as I am by the glories of the world and amusements of all sorts, I remember you and Dolly, and all the dear, good folks at

Bromley. 'Tis true I can't help it, but must and ever shall remember you with all pleasure.

Need I add that I am particularly, my dear, good friend,

Yours most affectionately,

B. FRANKLIN.

Epitaph for Himself

THE BODY
OF
BENJAMIN FRANKLIN
(LIKE THE COVER OF AN OLD BOOK,
ITS CONTENTS TORN OUT,
AND STRIPT OF ITS LETTERING AND GILDING),
LIES HERE FOOD FOR WORMS;
YET THE WORK ITSELF SHALL NOT BE LOST,
FOR IT WILL (AS HE BELIEVED) APPEAR ONCE MORE
IN A NEW
AND MORE BEAUTIFUL EDITION
CORRECTED AND AMENDED
BY
THE AUTHOR.

Francis Hopkinson

The Battle of the Kegs

THIS ballad was occasioned by a real incident. Certain machines, in the form of kegs, charged with gunpowder, were sent down the river to annoy the British shipping then at Philadelphia. The danger of these machines being discovered, the British manned the wharfs and shipping, and discharged their small arms and cannons at everything they saw floating in the river during the ebb-tide.—*Author's Note.*

Gallants attend and hear a friend
  Trill forth harmonious ditty,
Strange things I'll tell which late befell
  In Philadelphia city.

'Twas early day, as poets say,
  Just when the sun was rising,
A soldier stood on a log of wood,
  And saw a thing surprising.

As in amaze he stood and gazed,
  The truth can't be denied, sir,
He spied a score of kegs or more
  Come floating down the tide, sir.

A sailor, too, in jerkin blue,
  This strange appearance viewing,
First damned his eyes, in great surprise,
  Then said, "Some mischief's brewing.

"These kegs, I'm told, the rebels hold,
Packed up like pickled herring;
And they're come down to attack the town,
In this new way of ferrying."

The soldier flew, the sailor too,
And scared almost to death, sir,
Wore out their shoes, to spread the news,
And ran till out of breath, sir.

Now up and down throughout the town,
Most frantic scenes were acted;
And some ran here, and others there,
Like men almost distracted.

Some "fire" cried, which some denied,
But said the earth had quaked;
And girls and boys, with hideous noise,
Ran through the streets half-naked.

Sir William he, snug as a flea,
Lay all this time a-snoring,
Nor dreamed of harm as he lay warm,
In bed with Mrs. Loring.

Now in a fright he starts upright,
Awaked by such a clatter;
He rubs both eyes, and boldly cries,
"For God's sake, what's the matter?"

At his bedside he then espied,
Sir Erskine at command, sir,

Francis Hopkinson

Upon one foot he had one boot,
And th' other in his hand, sir.

"Arise, arise!" Sir Erskine cries,
"The rebels—more's the pity,
Without a boat are all afloat,
And ranged before the city.

"The motley crew, in vessels new,
With Satan for their guide, sir,
Packed up in bags, or wooden kegs,
Come driving down the tide, sir.

"Therefore prepare for bloody war,
The kegs must all be routed,
Or surely we despised shall be,
And British courage doubted."

The royal band now ready stand,
All ranged in dead array, sir,
With stomach stout to see it out,
And make a bloody day, sir.

The cannons roar from shore to shore,
The small arms make a rattle;
Since wars began I'm sure no man
E'er saw so strange a battle.

The rebel dales, the rebel vales,
With rebel trees surrounded,
The distant woods, the hills and floods,
With rebel echoes sounded.

The fish below swam to and fro,
  Attacked from every quarter;
Why sure, thought they, the devil's to pay,
  'Mongst folks above the water.

The kegs, 'tis said, though strongly made
  Of rebel staves and hoops, sir,
Could not oppose their powerful foes,
  And conquering British troops, sir.

From morn to night these men of might
  Displayed amazing courage;
And when the sun was fairly down,
  Retired to sup their porridge.

A hundred men with each a pen,
  Or more, upon my word, sir,
It is most true would be too few,
  Their valor to record, sir.

Such feats did they perform that day,
  Against these wicked kegs, sir,
That, years to come, if they get home,
  They'll make their boasts and brags, sir.

—*Miscellaneous Essays and Occasional Writings.*

James K. Paulding

The Revenge of Saint Nicholas

A Tale for the Holidays

EVERYBODY knows that, in the famous city of New York, whose proper name is Nieuw Amsterdam, the excellent St. Nicholas (who is worth a dozen St. Georges, with dragons to boot, and who, if every tub stood on its right bottom, would be at the head of the Seven Champions of Christendom)—I say, everybody knows that the excellent St. Nicholas, in holiday times, goes about among the people in the middle of the night, distributing all sorts of toothsome and becoming gifts to the good boys and girls in this his favorite city. Some say that he comes down the chimneys in a little Jersey wagon; others, that he wears a pair of Holland skates, with which he travels like the wind; and others, who pretend to have seen him, maintain that he has lately adopted a locomotive, and was once actually detected on the Albany railroad. But this last assertion is looked upon to be entirely fabulous, because St. Nicholas has too much discretion to trust himself in such a newfangled jarvie; and so I leave this matter to be settled by whomsoever will take the trouble. My own opinion is, that his favorite mode of traveling is on a canal, the motion and speed of which aptly comport with the philosophic dignity of his character. But this is not material, and I will no longer detain my readers with extraneous and irrelevant matters, as is too much the fashion with our statesmen, orators, biographers, and story-tellers.

It was in the year one thousand seven hundred and sixty, or sixty-one, for the most orthodox chronicles differ in this respect; but it was a very remarkable year, and it was called *annus mirabilis* on that account. It was said that several people were detected in speaking the truth, about that time; that nine staid, sober, and discreet widows, who had sworn on an antimasonic almanac never to enter a second time into the holy state, were snapped up by young husbands before they knew what they were about; that six venerable bachelors wedded as many buxom young belles, and, it is reported, were afterward sorry for what they had done; that many people actually went to church from motives of piety; and that a great scholar, who had written a book in support of certain opinions, was not only convinced of his error, but acknowledged it publicly afterward. No wonder the year one thousand seven hundred and sixty, if that was the year, was called *annus mirabilis!*

What contributed to render this year still more remarkable was the building of six new three-story brick houses in the city, and the fact of three persons' setting up equipages, who, I cannot find, ever failed in business afterward, or compounded with their creditors at a pistareen in the pound. It is, moreover, recorded in the annals of the horticultural society of that day (which it is said were written on a cabbage-leaf), that a member produced a forked radish of such vast dimensions that, being dressed up in fashionable male attire at the exhibition, it was actually mistaken for a traveled beau by several inexperienced young ladies, who pined away for love of its beautiful complexion, and were changed into daffadowndillies. Some maintained it was a mandrake, but it was finally detected by an inquest of experienced matrons. No wonder the year seventeen hundred and sixty was called *annus mirabilis!*

But the most extraordinary thing of all was the confident assertion that there was but one *gray mare* within the bills of mortality; and, incredible as it may appear, she was the wife of a responsible citizen, who, it was affirmed, had grown rich by weaving velvet purses out of sows' ears. But this we look upon as being somewhat of the character of the predictions of almanac-makers. Certain it is, however, that Amos Shuttle possessed the treasure of a wife who was shrewdly suspected of having established within doors a system of government not laid down in Aristotle or the Abbé Sieyès, who made a constitution for every day in the year, and two for the first of April.

Amos Shuttle, though a mighty pompous little man out of doors, was the humblest of human creatures within. He belonged to that class of people who pass for great among the little, and little among the great; and he would certainly have been master in his own house, had it not been for a woman. We have read somewhere that no wise woman ever thinks her husband a demigod. If so, it is a blessing that there are so few wise women in the world.

Amos had grown rich, Heaven knows how—he did not know himself; but, what was somewhat extraordinary, he considered his wealth a signal proof of his talents and sagacity, and valued himself according to the infallible standard of pounds, shillings, and pence. But, though he lorded it without, he was, as we have just said, the most gentle of men within doors. The moment he stepped inside of his own house, his spirit cowered down, like that of a pious man entering a church; he felt as if he was in the presence of a superior being—to wit, Mrs. Abigail Shuttle. He was, indeed, the meekest of mortals at home, except Moses; and Sir Andrew Aguecheek's song, which Sir Toby Belch declared "would draw nine souls

out of one weaver," would have failed in drawing half a one out of Amos. The truth is, his wife, who ought to have known, affirmed he had no more soul than a monkey; but he was the only man in the city thus circumstanced at the time we speak of. No wonder, therefore, the year one thousand seven hundred and sixty was called *annus mirabilis!*

Such as he was, Mr. Amos Shuttle waxed richer and richer every day, insomuch that those who envied his prosperity were wont to say, "that he had certainly been born with a dozen silver spoons in his mouth, or such a great blockhead would never have got together such a heap of money." When he had become worth ten thousand pounds, he launched his shuttle magnanimously out of the window, ordered his weaver's beam to be split up for oven-wood, and Mrs. Amos turned his weaver's shop into a *boudoir*. Fortune followed him faster than he ran away from her. In a few years the ten thousand doubled, and in a few more trebled, quadrupled—in short, Amos could hardly count his money.

"What shall we do now, my dear?" asked Mrs. Shuttle, who never sought his opinion, that I can learn, except for the pleasure of contradicting him.

"Let us go and live in the country, and enjoy ourselves," quoth Amos.

"Go into the country! go to ——" I could never satisfy myself what Mrs. Shuttle meant; but she stopped short, and concluded the sentence with a withering look of scorn, that would have cowed the spirits of nineteen weavers.

Amos named all sorts of places, enumerated all sorts of modes of life he could think of, and every pleasure that might enter into the imagination of a man without a soul. His wife despised them all; she would not hear of them.

"Well, my dear, suppose you suggest something; do now,

Abby," at length said Amos, in a coaxing whisper; "will you, my onydoney?"

"Ony fiddlestick! I wonder you repeat such vulgarisms. But if I must say what I should like, I should like to travel."

"Well, let us go and make a tour as far as Jamaica, or Hackensack, or Spiking-devil. There is excellent fishing for striped bass there."

"Spiking-devil!" screamed Mrs. Shuttle; "a'n't you ashamed to swear so, you wicked mortal! I won't go to Jamaica, nor to Hackensack among the Dutch Hottentots, nor to Spiking-devil to catch striped bass. I'll go to Europe!"

If Amos had possessed a soul, it would have jumped out of its skin at the idea of going beyond seas. He had once been on the sea-bass banks, and got a seasoning there; the very thought of which made him sick. But, as he had no soul, there was no great harm done.

When Mrs. Shuttle said a thing, it was settled. They went to Europe, taking their only son with them. The lady ransacked all the milliners' shops in Paris, and the gentleman visited all the restaurateurs. He became such a desperate connoisseur and gourmand, that he could almost tell an *omelette au jambon* from a gammon of bacon. After consummating the polish, they came home, the lady with the newest old fashions, and the weaver with a confirmed preference of *potage à la Turque* over pepperpot. It is said the city trembled as with an earthquake when they landed; but the notion was probably superstitious.

They arrived near the close of the year, the memorable year, the *annus mirabilis*, one thousand seven hundred and sixty. Everybody that had ever known the Shuttles flocked to see them, or rather to see what they had brought with them; and

such was the magic of a voyage to Europe that Mr. and Mrs. Amos Shuttle, who had been nobodies when they departed, became somebodies when they returned, and mounted at once to the summit of *ton*.

"You have come in good time to enjoy the festivities of the holidays," said Mrs. Hubblebubble, an old friend of Amos the weaver and his wife.

"We shall have a merry Christmas and a happy New-year!" exclaimed Mrs. Doubletrouble, another old acquaintance of old times.

"The holidays?" drawled Mrs. Shuttle; "the holidays? Christmas and New-year? Pray, what are they?"

It is astonishing to see how people lose their memories abroad, sometimes. They often forget their old friends and old customs; and, occasionally, themselves.

"Why, la! now, who'd have thought it?" cried Mrs. Doubletrouble; "why, sure you haven't forgot the oly koeks and the mince-pies, the merry meetings of friends, the sleigh-rides, the Kissing-bridge, and the family parties?"

"Family parties!" shrieked Mrs. Shuttle, and held her salts to her nose; "family parties! I never heard of anything so Gothic in Paris or Rome; and oly koeks—oh, shocking! and mince-pies—detestable! and throwing open one's doors to all one's old friends, whom one wishes to forget as soon as possible —oh! the idea is insupportable!" And again she held the salts to her nose.

Mrs. Hubblebubble and Mrs. Doubletrouble found they had exposed themselves sadly, and were quite ashamed. A real, genteel, well-bred, enlightened lady of fashion ought to have no rule of conduct, no conscience, but Paris—whatever is fashionable there is genteel—whatever is not fashionable is vulgar. There is no other standard of right, and no other

eternal fitness of things. At least so thought Mrs. Hubblebubble and Mrs. Doubletrouble.

"But is it possible that all these things are out of fashion, abroad?" asked the latter, beseechingly.

"They never were in," said Mrs. Amos Shuttle. "For my part, I mean to close my doors and windows on New-year's day—I'm determined."

"And so am I," said Mrs. Hubblebubble.

"And so am I," said Mrs. Doubletrouble.

And it was settled that they should make a combination among themselves and their friends, to put down the ancient and good customs of the city, and abolish the sports and enjoyments of the jolly New-year. The conspirators then separated, each to pursue her diabolical designs against oly koeks, mince-pies, sleigh-ridings, sociable visitings, and family parties.

Now the excellent St. Nicholas, who knows well what is going on in every house in the city, though, like a good and honorable saint, he never betrays any family secrets, overheard these wicked women plotting against his favorite anniversary, and he said to himself:

"*Vuur en Vlammen!*[1] but I'll be even with you, *mein vrouwen.*" So he determined he would play these conceited and misled women a trick or two before he had done with them.

It was now the first day of the new year, and Mrs. Amos Shuttle, and Mrs. Doubletrouble, and Mrs. Hubblebubble, and all their wicked accomplices, had shut up their doors and windows, so that when their old friends called they could not get into their houses. Moreover, they had prepared neither mince-pies, nor oly koeks, nor crullers, nor any of the good things consecrated to St. Nicholas by his pious and well-intentioned votaries; and they were mightily pleased at having

[1] Fire and flames.

been as dull and stupid as owls, while all the rest of the folks were as merry as crickets, chirping and frisking in the warm chimney-corner. Little did they think what horrible judgments were impending over them, prepared by the wrath of the excellent St. Nicholas, who was resolved to make an example of them for attempting to introduce their newfangled corruptions in place of the ancient customs of his favorite city. These wicked women never had another comfortable sleep in their lives!

The night was still, clear, and frosty—the earth was everywhere one carpet of snow, and looked just like the ghost of a dead world, wrapped in a white winding-sheet; the moon was full, round, and of a silvery brightness, and by her discreet silence afforded an example to the rising generation of young damsels, while the myriads of stars, that multiplied as you gazed at them, seemed as though they were frozen into icicles, they looked so cold, and sparkled with such a glorious luster. The streets and roads leading from the city were all alive with sleighs filled with jovial souls, whose echoing laughter and cheerful songs mingled with a thousand merry bells, that jingled in harmonious dissonance, giving spirit to the horses and animation to the scene. In the license of the season, warranted by long custom, each of the sleighs saluted the others in passing with a "Happy New-year," a merry jest, or a mischievous gibe, exchanged from one gay party to another. All was life, motion, and merriment; and as old frost-bitten Winter, aroused from his trance by the rout and revelry around, raised his weather-beaten head to see what was passing, he felt his icy blood warming and coursing through his veins, and wished he could only overtake the laughing buxom Spring, that he might dance a jig with her, and be as frisky as the best of them. But as the old rogue could not bring this desirable

matter about, he contented himself with calling for a jolly bumper of cocktail, and drinking a swingeing draught to the health of the blessed St. Nicholas, and those who honor the memory of the president of good fellows.

All this time the wicked women and their accomplices lay under the malediction of the good saint, who caused them to be bewitched by an old lady from Salem. Mrs. Amos Shuttle could not sleep, because something had whispered in her apprehensive ear that her son, her only son, whom she had engaged to the daughter of Count Grenouille, in Paris, then about three years old, was actually at that moment crossing Kissing-bridge, in company with little Susan Varian, and some others. Now Susan was the fairest little lady of all the land. She had a face and an eye just like the Widow Wadman in Leslie's charming picture, a face and an eye which no reasonable man under heaven could resist, except my Uncle Toby—beshrew him and his fortifications, I say! She was, moreover, a good little girl, and an accomplished little girl—but alas! she had not mounted to that step in the Jacob's ladder of fashion which qualifies a person for the heaven of high *ton*, and Mrs. Shuttle had not been to Europe for nothing. She would rather have seen her son wedded to dissipation and profligacy than to Susan Varian; and the thought of his being out sleigh-riding with her was worse than the toothache. It kept her awake all the livelong night; and the only consolation she had was scolding poor Amos, because the sleigh-bells made such a noise.

As for Mrs. Hubblebubble and Mrs. Doubletrouble, neither of the wretches got a wink of sleep during a whole week, for thinking of the beautiful French chairs and damask curtains Mrs. Shuttle had brought from Europe. They forthwith besieged their good men, leaving them no rest until they sent out orders to Paris for just such rich chairs and curtains as

those of the thrice-happy Mrs. Shuttle, from whom they kept the affair a profound secret, each meaning to treat her to an agreeable surprise. In the meanwhile they could not rest, for fear the vessel which was to bring these treasures might be lost on her passage. Such was the dreadful judgment inflicted on them by the good St. Nicholas.

The perplexities of Mrs. Shuttle increased daily. In the first place, do all she could, she could not make Amos a fine gentleman. This was a metamorphosis which Ovid would never have dreamed of. He would be telling the price of everything in his house, his furniture, his wines, and his dinners, insomuch that those who envied his prosperity, or, perhaps, only despised his pretensions, were wont to say, after eating his venison and drinking his old Madeira, "that he ought to have been a tavern-keeper, he knew so well how to make out a bill." Mrs. Shuttle once overheard a speech of this kind, and the good St. Nicholas himself, who had brought it about, almost felt sorry for the mortification she endured on the occasion.

Scarcely had she got over this, when she was invited to a ball by Mrs. Hubblebubble, and the first thing she saw on entering the drawing-room was a suit of damask curtains and chairs as much like her own as two peas, only the curtains had far handsomer fringe. Mrs. Shuttle came very near fainting away, but escaped for that time, determining to mortify this impudent creature by taking not the least notice of her finery. But St. Nicholas ordered it otherwise, so that she was at last obliged to acknowledge they were very elegant indeed. Nay, this was not the worst, for she overhead one lady whisper to another that Mrs. Hubblebubble's curtains were much richer than Mrs. Shuttle's.

"Oh, I dare say," replied the other—"I dare say Mrs.

Shuttle bought them second-hand, for her husband is as mean as pursley."

This was too much. The unfortunate woman was taken suddenly ill—called her carriage, and went home, where it is supposed she would have died that evening, had she not wrought upon Amos to promise her an entire new suit of French furniture for her drawing-room and parlor to boot, besides a new carriage. But for all this she could not close her eyes that night, for thinking of the "second-hand curtains."

Nor was the wicked Mrs. Doubletrouble a whit better off, when her friend Mrs. Hubblebubble treated her to the agreeable surprise of the French window-curtains and chairs. "It is too bad—too bad, I declare," said she to herself; "but I'll pay her off soon." Accordingly she issued invitations for a grand ball and supper, at which both Mrs. Shuttle and Mrs. Hubblebubble were struck dumb at beholding a suit of curtains and a set of chairs exactly of the same pattern with theirs. The shock was terrible, and it is impossible to say what might have been the consequences had not the two ladies all at once thought of uniting in abusing Mrs. Doubletrouble for her extravagance.

"I pity poor Mr. Doubletrouble," said Mrs. Shuttle, shrugging her shoulders significantly, and glancing at the room.

"And so do I," said Mrs. Hubblebubble, doing the same.

Mrs. Doubletrouble had her eye upon them, and enjoyed their mortification, until her pride was brought to the ground by a dead shot from Mrs. Shuttle, who was heard to exclaim, in reply to a lady who observed that the chairs and curtains were very handsome:

"Why, yes; but they have been out of fashion in Paris a long time; and, besides, really they are getting so common, that I intend to have mine removed to the nursery."

Heavens! what a blow! Poor Mrs. Doubletrouble hardly survived it. Such a night of misery as the wicked woman endured almost made the good St. Nicholas regret the judgment he had passed upon these mischievous and conceited females. But he thought to himself he would persevere, until he had made them a sad example to all innovators upon the ancient customs of our forefathers.

Thus were these wicked and miserable women spurred on by witchcraft from one piece of prodigality to another, and a deadly rivalship grew up between them, which destroyed their own happiness and that of their husbands. Mrs. Shuttle's new carriage and drawing-room furniture in due time were followed by similar extravagances on the part of the two other wicked women who had conspired against the hallowed institutions of St. Nicholas; and soon their rivalry came to such a height that not one of them had a moment's rest or comfort from that time forward. But they still shut their doors on the jolly anniversary of St. Nicholas, though the old respectable burghers and their wives, who had held up their heads time out of mind, continued the good custom, and laughed at the presumption of these upstart interlopers, who were followed only by a few people of silly pretensions, who had no more soul than Amos Shuttle himself. The three wicked women grew to be almost perfect skeletons, on account of the vehemence with which they strove to outdo each other, and the terrible exertions necessary to keep up the appearance of being the best friends in the world. In short, they became the laughing-stock of the town; and sensible, well-bred folks cut their acquaintance, except when they sometimes accepted an invitation to a party, just to make merry with their folly and conceitedness.

The excellent St. Nicholas, finding they still persisted in

their opposition to his rites and ceremonies, determined to inflict on them the last and worst punishment that can befall the sex. He decreed that they should be deprived of all the delights springing from the domestic affections, and all taste for the innocent and virtuous enjoyments of a happy fireside. Accordingly, they lost all relish for home; were continually gadding about from one place to another in search of pleasure; and worried themselves to death to find happiness where it is never to be found. Their whole lives became one long series of disappointed hopes, galled pride, and gnawing envy. They lost their health, they lost their time, and their days became days of harassing impatience, their nights nights of sleepless, feverish excitement, ending in weariness and disappointment. The good saint sometimes felt sorry for them, but their continued obstinacy determined him to persist in his scheme for punishing the upstart pride of these rebellious females.

Young Shuttle, who had a soul, which I suppose he inherited from his mother, all this while continued his attentions to little Susan Varian, and so added to the miseries inflicted on the wicked old woman. Mrs. Shuttle insisted that Amos should threaten to disinherit his son, unless he gave up this attachment.

"Lord bless your soul, Abby," said Amos, "what's the use of my threatening? The boy knows, as well as I do, that I've no will of my own. Why, bless my soul, Abby——"

"Bless your soul!" interrupted Mrs. Shuttle; "I wonder who'd take the trouble to bless it, but yourself! However, if you don't, I will."

Accordingly she threatened the young man with being disinherited, unless he turned his back on little Susan Varian, which no man ever did without getting a heartache.

"If my father goes on as he has done lately," sighed the youth, "he won't have anything left to disinherit me of but his affection, I fear. But if he had millions I would not abandon Susan."

"Are you not ashamed of such a plebeian attachment? You, that have been to Europe! But, once for all, remember this, renounce this lowborn upstart, or quit your father's home forever."

"Upstart!" thought young Shuttle—"one of the oldest families in the city." He made his mother a respectful bow, bade Heaven bless her, and left the house. He was, however, met at the door by his father, who said to him:

"Johnny, I give my consent; but mind, don't tell your mother a word of the matter. I'll let her know I've a soul, as well as other people;" and he tossed his head like a war-horse.

The night after this, Johnny was married to little Susan, and the blessing of affection and beauty lighted upon his pillow. Her old father, who was in a respectable business, took his son-in-law into partnership, and they prospered so well that, in a few years, Johnny was independent of all the world, with the prettiest wife and children in the land. But Mrs. Shuttle was inexorable, while the knowledge of his prosperity and happiness only worked her up to a higher pitch of anger, and added to the pangs of jealousy perpetually inflicted on her by the rivalry of Mrs. Hubblebubble and Mrs. Double-trouble, who suffered under the like infliction from the wrathful St. Nicholas, who was resolved to make them an example to all posterity.

No fortune, be it ever so great, can stand the eternal sapping of wasteful extravagance, engendered and stimulated by the baleful passion of envy. In less than ten years from the hatch-

ing of the diabolical conspiracy of these three wicked women against the supremacy of the excellent St. Nicholas, their spendthrift rivalship had ruined the fortunes of their husbands, and entailed upon themselves misery and remorse. Rich Amos Shuttle became at last as poor as a church-mouse, and would have been obliged to take to the loom again in his old age, had not Johnny, now rich, and a worshipful magistrate of the city, afforded him and his better half a generous shelter under his own happy roof. Mrs. Hubblebubble and Mrs. Doubletrouble had scarcely time to condole with Mrs. Shuttle, and congratulate each other, when their husbands went the way of all flesh, that is to say, failed for a few tens of thousands, and called their creditors together to hear the good news. The two wicked women lived long enough after this to repent of their offense against St. Nicholas; but they never imported any more French curtains, and at last perished miserably in an attempt to set the fashions in Pennypot alley.

Mrs. Abigail Shuttle might have lived happily the rest of her life with her children and grandchildren (who all treated her with reverent courtesy and affection), now that the wrath of the mighty St. Nicholas was appeased by her exemplary punishment. But she could not get over her bad habits and feelings, or forgive her lovely little daughter-in-law for treating her so kindly when she so little deserved it. She gradually pined away; and though she revived on hearing of the catastrophe of Mrs. Hubblebubble and Mrs. Doubletrouble, it was only for a moment. The remainder of the life of this nefarious woman was a series of disappointments and heart-burnings. When she died, Amos tried to shed a few tears, but he found it impossible; I suppose because, as his wife always said, "he had no soul."

Such was the terrible revenge of St. Nicholas, which ought

to be a warning to all who attempt to set themselves up against the venerable customs of their ancestors, and backslide from the hallowed institutions of the blessed saint, to whose good offices, without doubt, it is owing that this his favorite city has transcended all others of the universe in beautiful damsels, valorous young men, mince-pies, and New-year cookies. The catastrophe of these three iniquitous wives had a wonderful influence in the city, insomuch that, from this time forward, no *gray mares* were ever known, no French furniture was ever used, and no woman was hardy enough to set herself up in opposition to the good customs of St. Nicholas. And so, wishing many happy New-years to all my dear countrywomen and countrymen, saving those who shut their doors to old friends, high or low, rich or poor, on that blessed anniversary which makes more glad hearts than all others put together—I say, wishing a thousand happy New-years to all with this single exception, I lay down my pen, with a caution to all wicked women to beware of the revenge of St. Nicholas.

—*"Tales of the Good Woman."*

Washington Irving

Wouter Van Twiller

It was in the year of our Lord 1629 that Mynheer Wouter Van Twiller was appointed Governor of the province of Nieuw Nederlandts, under the commission and control of their High Mightinesses the Lords States General of the United Netherlands, and the privileged West India Company.

This renowned old gentleman arrived at New Amsterdam in the merry month of June, the sweetest month in all the year; when Dan Apollo seems to dance up the transparent firmament —when the robin, the thrush, and a thousand other wanton songsters make the woods to resound with amorous ditties, and the luxurious little bob-lincoln revels among the clover blossoms of the meadows—all which happy coincidences persuaded the old dames of New Amsterdam, who were skilled in the art of foretelling events, that this was to be a happy and prosperous administration.

The renowned Wouter (or Walter) Van Twiller was descended from a long line of Dutch burgomasters, who had successively dozed away their lives and grown fat upon the bench of magistracy in Rotterdam, and who had comported themselves with such singular wisdom and propriety that they were never either heard or talked of—which, next to being universally applauded, should be the object of ambition of all magistrates and rulers. There are two opposite ways by which some men make a figure in the world; one, by talking faster than they think, and the other, by holding their tongues and not thinking at all. By the first, many a smatterer acquires

the reputation of a man of quick parts; by the other, many a dunderpate, like the owl, the stupidest of birds, comes to be considered the very type of wisdom. This, by the way, is a casual remark, which I would not, for the universe, have it thought I apply to Governor Van Twiller. It is true he was a man shut up within himself, like an oyster, and rarely spoke, except in monosyllables; but then it was allowed he seldom said a foolish thing. So invincible was his gravity that he was never known to laugh or even to smile through the whole course of a long and prosperous life. Nay, if a joke were uttered in his presence that set light-minded hearers in a roar, it was observed to throw him into a state of perplexity. Sometimes he would deign to inquire into the matter, and when, after much explanation, the joke was made as plain as a pike-staff, he would continue to smoke his pipe in silence, and at length, knocking out the ashes, would exclaim, "Well, I see nothing in all that to laugh about!"

With all his reflective habits, he never made up his mind on a subject. His adherents accounted for this by the astonishing magnitude of his ideas. He conceived every subject on so grand a scale that he had not room in his head to turn it over and examine both sides of it. Certain it is that, if any matter were propounded to him on which ordinary mortals would rashly determine at first glance, he would put on a vague, mysterious look, shake his capacious head, smoke some time in profound silence, and at length observe that "he had his doubts about the matter"; which gained him the reputation of a man slow of belief and not easily imposed upon. What is more, it gained him a lasting name; for to this habit of the mind has been attributed his surname of Twiller; which is said to be a corruption of the original Twijfler, or, in plain English, *Doubter*.

Washington Irving

The person of this illustrious old gentleman was formed and proportioned as though it had been molded by the hands of some cunning Dutch statuary, as a model of majesty and lordly grandeur. He was exactly five feet six inches in height, and six feet five inches in circumference. His head was a perfect sphere, and of such stupendous dimensions that Dame Nature, with all her sex's ingenuity, would have been puzzled to construct a neck capable of supporting it; wherefore she wisely declined the attempt, and settled it firmly on the top of his backbone, just between the shoulders. His body was oblong, and particularly capacious at bottom; which was wisely ordered by Providence seeing that he was a man of sedentary habits, and very averse to the idle labor of walking. His legs were short, but sturdy in proportion to the weight they had to sustain, so that when erect he had not a little the appearance of a beer-barrel on skids. His face, that infallible index of the mind, presented a vast expanse, unfurrowed by those lines and angles which disfigure the human countenance with what is termed expression. Two small gray eyes twinkled feebly in the midst, like two stars of lesser magnitude in a hazy firmament; and his full-fed cheeks, which seemed to have taken toll of everything that went into his mouth, were curiously mottled and streaked with dusky red, like a Spitzenberg apple.

His habits were as regular as his person. He daily took his four stated meals, appropriating exactly an hour to each; he smoked and doubted eight hours, and he slept the remaining twelve of the four-and-twenty. Such was the renowned Wouter Van Twiller—a true philosopher, for his mind was either elevated above, or tranquilly settled below, the cares and perplexities of this world. He had lived in it for years, without feeling the least curiosity to know whether the sun revolved round it, or it round the sun; and he had watched for at least

half a century the smoke curling from his pipe to the ceiling, without once troubling his head with any of those numerous theories by which a philosopher would have perplexed his brain, in accounting for its rising above the surrounding atmosphere.

In his council he presided with great state and solemnity. He sat in a huge chair of solid oak, hewn in the celebrated forest of The Hague, fabricated by an experienced timmerman of Amsterdam, and curiously carved about the arms and feet into exact imitations of gigantic eagle's claws. Instead of a scepter, he swayed a long Turkish pipe, wrought with jasmine and amber, which had been presented to a stadtholder of Holland at the conclusion of a treaty with one of the petty Barbary powers. In this stately chair would he sit, and this magnificent pipe would he smoke, shaking his right knee with a constant motion, and fixing his eye for hours together upon a little print of Amsterdam which hung in a black frame against the opposite wall of the council chamber. Nay, it has even been said that when any deliberation of extraordinary length and intricacy was on the carpet, the renowned Wouter would shut his eyes for full two hours at a time, that he might not be disturbed by external objects; and at such times the internal commotion of his mind was evinced by certain regular guttural sounds, which his admirers declared were merely the noise of conflict made by his contending doubts and opinions.

It is with infinite difficulty I have been enabled to collect these biographical anecdotes of the great man under consideration. The facts respecting him were so scattered and vague, and divers of them so questionable in point of authenticity, that I have had to give up the search after many, and decline the admission of still more, which would have tended to heighten the coloring of his portrait.

I have been the more anxious to delineate fully the person

and habits of Wouter Van Twiller, from the consideration that he was not only the first but also the best Governor that ever presided over this ancient and respectable province; and so tranquil and benevolent was his reign, that I do not find throughout the whole of it a single instance of any offender being brought to punishment—a most indubitable sign of a merciful Governor, and a case unparalleled, excepting in the reign of the illustrious King Log, from whom, it is hinted, the renowned Van Twiller was a lineal descendant.

The very outset of the career of this excellent magistrate was distinguished by an example of legal acumen that gave flattering presage of a wise and equitable administration. The morning after he had been installed in office, and at the moment that he was making his breakfast from a prodigious earthen dish, filled with milk and Indian pudding, he was interrupted by the appearance of Wandle Schoonhoven, a very important old burgher of New Amsterdam, who complained bitterly of one Barent Bleecker, inasmuch as he refused to come to a settlement of accounts, seeing that there was a heavy balance in favor of the said Wandle. Governor Van Twiller, as I have already observed, was a man of few words; he was likewise a mortal enemy to multiplying writings—or being disturbed at his breakfast. Having listened attentively to the statement of Wandle Schoonhoven, giving an occasional grunt, as he shoveled a spoonful of Indian pudding into his mouth—either as a sign that he relished the dish, or comprehended the story—he called unto him his constable, and pulling out of his breeches pocket a huge jack-knife, despatched it after the defendant as a summons, accompanied by his tobacco-box as a warrant.

This summary process was as effectual in those simple days as was the seal-ring of the great Harun-al-Raschid among the true believers. The two parties being confronted before him,

each produced a book of accounts, written in a language and character that would have puzzled any but a High-Dutch commentator or a learned decipherer of Egyptian obelisks. The sage Wouter took them one after the other, and having poised them in his hands and attentively counted over the number of leaves, fell straightway into a very great doubt, and smoked for half an hour without saying a word; at length, laying his finger beside his nose and shutting his eyes for a moment, with the air of a man who has just caught a subtle idea by the tail, he slowly took his pipe from his mouth, puffed forth a column of tobacco-smoke, and with marvelous gravity and solemnity pronounced, that, having carefully counted over the leaves and weighed the books, it was found that one was just as thick and as heavy as the other; therefore, it was the final opinion of the court that the accounts were equally balanced: therefore, Wandle should give Barent a receipt, and Barent should give Wandle a receipt, and the constable should pay the costs.

This decision, being straightway made known, diffused general joy throughout New Amsterdam, for the people immediately perceived that they had a very wise and equitable magistrate to rule over them. But its happiest effect was that not another lawsuit took place throughout the whole of his administration; and the office of constable fell into such decay that there was not one of those losel scouts known in the province for many years. I am the more particular in dwelling on this transaction, not only because I deem it one of the most sage and righteous judgments on record, and well worthy the attention of modern magistrates, but because it was a miraculous event in the history of the renowned Wouter—being the only time he was ever known to come to a decision in the whole course of his life.

Wilhelmus Kieft

As some sleek ox, sunk in the rich repose of a clover-field, dozing and chewing the cud, will bear repeated blows before it raises itself, so the province of Nieuw Nederlandts, having waxed fat under the drowsy reign of the Doubter, needed cuffs and kicks to rouse it into action. The reader will now witness the manner in which a peaceful community advances toward a state of war; which is apt to be like the approach of a horse to a drum, with much prancing and little progress, and too often with the wrong end foremost.

Wilhelmus Kieft, who in 1634 ascended the gubernatorial chair (to borrow a favorite though clumsy appellation of modern phraseologists), was of a lofty descent, his father being inspector of windmills in the ancient town of Saardam; and our hero, we are told, when a boy, made very curious investigations into the nature and operations of these machines, which was one reason why he afterward came to be so ingenious a Governor. His name, according to the most authentic etymologists, was a corruption of Kyver—that is to say, a *wrangler* or *scolder*, and expressed the characteristic of his family, which, for nearly two centuries, have kept the windy town of Saardam in hot water and produced more tartars and brimstones than any ten families in the place; and so truly did he inherit this family peculiarity, that he had not been a year in the government of the province before he was universally denominated William the Testy. His appearance answered to his name. He was a brisk, wiry, waspish little old gentleman, such a one

as may now and then be seen stumping about our city in a broad-skirted coat with huge buttons, a cocked hat stuck on the back of his head, and a cane as high as his chin. His face was broad, but his features were sharp; his cheeks were scorched into a dusky red by two fiery little gray eyes, his nose turned up, and the corners of his mouth turned down, pretty much like the muzzle of an irritable pug-dog.

I have heard it observed by a profound adept in human physiology, that if a woman waxes fat with the progress of years, her tenure of life is somewhat precarious, but if haply she withers as she grows old, she lives forever. Such promised to be the case with William the Testy, who grew tough in proportion as he dried. He had withered, in fact, not through the process of years, but through the tropical fervor of his soul, which burnt like a vehement rushlight in his bosom, inciting him to incessant broils and bickerings. Ancient tradition speaks much of his learning, and of the gallant inroads he had made into the dead languages, in which he had made captive a host of Greek nouns and Latin verbs, and brought off rich booty in ancient saws and apothegms, which he was wont to parade in his public harangues, as a triumphant general of yore his *spolia opima*. Of metaphysics he knew enough to confound all hearers and himself into the bargain. In logic he knew the whole family of syllogisms and dilemmas, and was so proud of his skill that he never suffered even a self-evident fact to pass unargued. It was observed, however, that he seldom got into an argument without getting into a perplexity, and then into a passion with his adversary for not being convinced gratis.

He had, moreover, skirmished smartly on the frontiers of several of the sciences, was fond of experimental philosophy, and prided himself upon inventions of all kinds. His abode,

which he had fixed at a Bowerie or country-seat at a short distance from the city, just at what is now called Dutch Street, soon abounded with proofs of his ingenuity: patent smoke-jacks that required a horse to work them; Dutch ovens that roasted meat without fire; carts that went before the horses; weathercocks that turned against the wind; and other wrong-headed contrivances that astonished and confounded all beholders. The house, too, was beset with paralytic cats and dogs, the subjects of his experimental philosophy; and the yelling and yelping of the latter unhappy victims of science, while aiding in the pursuit of knowledge, soon gained for the place the name of "Dog's Misery," by which it continues to be known even at the present day.

It is in knowledge as in swimming: he who flounders and splashes on the surface makes more noise, and attracts more attention, than the pearl-diver who quietly dives in quest of treasures to the bottom. The vast acquirements of the new Governor were the theme of marvel among the simple burghers of New Amsterdam; he figured about the place as learned a man as a Bonze at Pekin, who had mastered one-half of the Chinese alphabet, and was unanimously pronounced a "universal genius!" . . .

Thus end the authenticated chronicles of the reign of William the Testy; for henceforth, in the troubles, perplexities and confusion of the times, he seems to have been totally overlooked, and to have slipped forever through the fingers of scrupulous history. . . .

It is true that certain of the early provincial poets, of whom there were great numbers in the Nieuw Nederlandts, taking advantage of his mysterious exit, have fabled that, like Romulus, he was translated to the skies, and forms a very fiery little star somewhere on the left claw of the Crab; while others,

equally fanciful, declare that he had experienced a fate similar to that of the good King Arthur, who, we are assured by ancient bards, was carried away to the delicious abodes of fairy-land, where he still exists in pristine worth and vigor, and will one day or another return to restore the gallantry, the honor and the immaculate probity which prevailed in the glorious days of the Round Table.

All these, however, are but pleasing fantasies, the cobweb visions of those dreaming varlets, the poets, to which I would not have my judicious readers attach any credibility. Neither am I disposed to credit an ancient and rather apocryphal historian who asserts that the ingenious Wilhelmus was annihilated by the blowing down of one of his windmills; nor a writer of later times, who affirms that he fell a victim to an experiment in natural history, having the misfortune to break his neck from a garret window of the stadthouse in attempting to catch swallows by sprinkling salt upon their tails. Still less do I put my faith in the tradition that he perished at sea in conveying home to Holland a treasure of golden ore, discovered somewhere among the haunted regions of the Catskill Mountains.

The most probable account declares that, what with the constant troubles on his frontiers, the incessant schemings and projects going on in his own pericranium, the memorials, petitions, remonstrances and sage pieces of advice of respectable meetings of the sovereign people, and the refractory disposition of his councilors, who were sure to differ from him on every point and uniformly to be in the wrong, his mind was kept in a furnace-heat until he became as completely burnt out as a Dutch family pipe which has passed through three generations of hard smokers. In this manner did he undergo a kind of animal combustion. consuming away like a farthing rushlight;

so that when grim death finally snuffed him out there was scarce left enough of him to bury.

Peter Stuyvesant

PETER STUYVESANT was the last, and, like the renowned Wouter Van Twiller, the best of our ancient Dutch Governors, Wouter having surpassed all who preceded him, and Peter, or Piet, as he was sociably called by the old Dutch burghers, who were ever prone to familiarize names, having never been equaled by any successor. He was in fact the very man fitted by nature to retrieve the desperate fortunes of her beloved province, had not the Fates, those most potent and unrelenting of all ancient spinsters, destined them to inextricable confusion.

To say merely that he was a hero would be doing him great injustice; he was in truth a combination of heroes; for he was of a sturdy, raw-boned make, like Ajax Telamon, with a pair of round shoulders that Hercules would have given his hide for (meaning his lion's hide) when he undertook to ease old Atlas of his load. He was, moreover, as Plutarch describes Coriolanus, not only terrible for the force of his arm, but likewise of his voice, which sounded as though it came out of a barrel; and, like the self-same warrior, he possessed a sovereign contempt for the sovereign people, and an iron aspect which was enough of itself to make the very bowels of his adversaries quake with terror and dismay. All this martial excellency of appearance was inexpressibly heightened by an accidental advantage, with which I am surprised that neither Homer nor Virgil have graced any of their heroes. This was nothing less than a wooden leg, which was the only prize he had gained in

bravely fighting the battles of his country, but of which he was so proud that he was often heard to declare he valued it more than all his other limbs put together; indeed, so highly did he esteem it that he had it gallantly enchased and relieved with silver devices, which caused it to be related in divers histories and legends that he wore a silver leg.

Antony Van Corlear

THE very first movements of the great Peter, on taking the reins of government, displayed his magnanimity, though they occasioned not a little marvel and uneasiness among the people of the Manhattoes. Finding himself constantly interrupted by the opposition, and annoyed by the advice of his privy council, the members of which had acquired the unreasonable habit of thinking and speaking for themselves during the preceding reign, he determined at once to put a stop to such grievous abominations. Scarcely, therefore, had he entered upon his authority than he turned out of office all the meddlesome spirits of the factious cabinet of William the Testy; in place of whom he chose unto himself counselers from those fat, somniferous, respectable burghers who had flourished and slumbered under the easy reign of Walter the Doubter. All these he caused to be furnished with abundance of fair long pipes, and to be regaled with frequent corporation dinners, admonishing them to smoke, and eat, and sleep for the good of the nation, while he took the burden of government upon his own shoulders—an arrangement to which they all gave hearty acquiescence.

Nor did he stop here, but made a hideous rout among the

inventions and expedients of his learned predecessor, rooting up his patent gallows, where caitiff vagabonds were suspended by the waistband; demolishing his flag-staffs and windmills, which, like mighty giants, guarded the ramparts of New Amsterdam; pitching to the duyvel whole batteries of Quaker guns; and, in a word, turning topsy-turvy the whole philosophic, economic and windmill system of the immortal sage of Saardam.

The honest folks of New Amsterdam began to quake now for the fate of their matchless champion, Antony the Trumpeter, who had acquired prodigious favor in the eyes of the women by means of his whiskers and his trumpet. Him did Peter the Headstrong cause to be brought into his presence, and eying him for a moment from head to foot, with a countenance that would have appalled anything else than a sounder of brass—"Pr'ythee, who and what art thou?" said he. "Sire," replied the other, in nowise dismayed, "for my name, it is Antony Van Corlear; for my parentage, I am the son of my mother; for my profession, I am champion and garrison of this great city of New Amsterdam." "I doubt me much," said Peter Stuyvesant, "that thou art some scurvy costard-monger knave. How didst thou acquire this paramount honor and dignity?" "Marry, sir," replied the other, "like many a great man before me, simply *by sounding my own trumpet.*" "Aye, is it so?" quoth the Governor; "why, then, let us have a relish of thy art." Whereupon the good Antony put his instrument to his lips, and sounded a charge with such a tremendous outset, such a delectable quaver, and such a triumphant cadence, that it was enough to make one's heart leap out of one's mouth only to be within a mile of it. Like as a war-worn charger, grazing in peaceful plains, starts at a strain of martial music, pricks up his ears, and snorts, and paws, and kindles at the noise, so did the heroic Peter joy to hear the clangor of the trumpet:

for of him might truly be said, what was recorded of the renowned St. George of England, "there was nothing in all the world that more rejoiced his heart than to hear the pleasant sound of war, and see the soldiers brandish forth their steeled weapons." Casting his eye more kindly, therefore, upon the sturdy Van Corlear, and finding him to be a jovial varlet, shrewd in his discourse, yet of great discretion and immeasurable wind, he straightway conceived a vast kindness for him, and discharging him from the troublesome duty of garrisoning, defending and alarming the city, ever after retained him about his person as his chief favorite, confidential envoy and trusty squire. Instead of disturbing the city with disastrous notes, he was instructed to play so as to delight the Governor while at his repasts, as did the minstrels of yore in the days of the glorious chivalry—and on all public occasions to rejoice the ears of the people with warlike melody—thereby keeping alive a noble and martial spirit.

General Van Poffenburgh

It is tropically observed by honest old Socrates that Heaven infuses into some men at their birth a portion of intellectual gold, into others of intellectual silver, while others are intellectually furnished with iron and brass. Of the last class was General Van Poffenburgh; and it would seem as if Dame Nature, who will sometimes be partial, had given him brass enough for a dozen ordinary braziers. All this he had contrived to pass off upon William the Testy for genuine gold; and the little Governor would sit for hours and listen to his gunpowder stories of exploits, which left those of Tirante the White, Don Belianis of

Greece, or St. George and the Dragon quite in the background. Having been promoted by William Kieft to the command of his whole disposable forces, he gave importance to his station by the grandiloquence of his bulletins, always styling himself Commander-in-Chief of the Armies of the New Netherlands, though in sober truth these armies were nothing more than a handful of hen-stealing, bottle-bruising ragamuffins.

In person he was not very tall, but exceedingly round; neither did his bulk proceed from his being fat, but windy, being blown up by a prodigious conviction of his own importance, until he resembled one of those bags of wind given by Æolus, in an incredible fit of generosity, to that vagabond warrior Ulysses. His windy endowments had long excited the admiration of Antony Van Corlear, who is said to have hinted more than once to William the Testy that in making Van Poffenburgh a general he had spoiled an admirable trumpeter.

As it is the practise in ancient story to give the reader a description of the arms and equipments of every noted warrior, I will bestow a word upon the dress of this redoubtable commander. It comported with his character, being so crossed and slashed, and embroidered with lace and tinsel, that he seemed to have as much brass without as Nature had stored away within. He was swathed, too, in a crimson sash, of the size and texture of a fishing-net—doubtless to keep his swelling heart from bursting through his ribs. His face glowed with furnace-heat from between a huge pair of well-powdered whiskers, and his valorous soul seemed ready to bounce out of a pair of large, glassy, blinking eyes, projecting like those of a lobster.

I swear to thee, worthy reader, if history and tradition belie not this warrior, I would give all the money in my pocket to have seen him accoutred *cap-à-pie*—booted to the middle,

sashed to the chin, collared to the ears, whiskered to the teeth, crowned with an overshadowing cocked hat, and girded with a leathern belt ten inches broad, from which trailed a falchion, of a length that I dare not mention. Thus equipped, he strutted about, as bitter-looking a man of war as the far-famed More, of Morehall, when he sallied forth to slay the dragon of Wantley. For what says the ballad?

"Had you but seen him in this dress,
How fierce he looked and how big,
You would have thought him for to be
Some Egyptian porcupig.
He frighted all—cats, dogs, and all,
Each cow, each horse, and each hog;
For fear they did flee, for they took him to be
Some strange outlandish hedgehog."

—"*Knickerbocker's History of New York.*"

The Legend of Sleepy Hollow

Found Among the Papers of the late Diedrich Knickerbocker

A pleasing land of drowsy head it was,
Of dreams that wave before the half-shut eye;
And of gay castles in the clouds that pass,
Forever flushing round a summer sky.

Castle of Indolence.

In the bosom of one of those spacious coves which indent the eastern shore of the Hudson, at that broad expansion of the river denominated by the ancient Dutch navigators the Tappan Zee, and where they always prudently shortened sail and implored the protection of St. Nicholas when they crossed, there

lies a small market-town or rural port, which by some is called Greensburgh, but which is more generally and properly known by the name of Tarry Town. This name was given, we are told, in former days, by the good housewives of the adjacent country, from the inveterate propensity of their husbands to linger about the village tavern on market-days. Be that as it may, I do not vouch for the fact, but merely advert to it, for the sake of being precise and authentic. Not far from this village, perhaps about two miles, there is a little valley or rather lap of land among high hills, which is one of the quietest places in the whole world. A small brook glides through it, with just murmur enough to lull one to repose; and the occasional whistle of a quail or tapping of a woodpecker is almost the only sound that ever breaks in upon the uniform tranquillity.

I recollect that, when a stripling, my first exploit in squirrel-shooting was in a grove of tall walnut-trees that shades one side of the valley. I had wandered into it at noontime, when all nature is peculiarly quiet, and was startled by the roar of my own gun, as it broke the Sabbath stillness around and was prolonged and reverberated by the angry echoes. If ever I should wish for a retreat whither I might steal from the world and its distractions, and dream quietly away the remnant of a troubled life, I know of none more promising than this little valley.

From the listless repose of the place, and the peculiar character of its inhabitants, who are descendants from the original Dutch settlers, this sequestered glen has long been known by the name of SLEEPY HOLLOW, and its rustic lads are called the Sleepy Hollow Boys throughout all the neighboring country. A drowsy, dreamy influence seems to hang over the land, and to pervade the very atmosphere. Some say that the place was bewitched by a High German doctor, during the early days of the settlement; others, that an old Indian chief, the prophet or

wizard of his tribe, held his powwows there before the country was discovered by Master Hendrick Hudson. Certain it is, the place still continues under the sway of some witching power, that holds a spell over the minds of the good people, causing them to walk in a continual reverie. They are given to all kinds of marvelous beliefs; are subject to trances and visions, and frequently see strange sights, and hear music and voices in the air. The whole neighborhood abounds with local tales, haunted spots, and twilight superstitions; stars shoot and meteors glare oftener across the valley than in any other part of the country, and the nightmare, with her whole ninefold, seems to make it the favorite scene of her gambols.

The dominant spirit, however, that haunts this enchanted region, and seems to be commander-in-chief of all the powers of the air, is the apparition of a figure on horseback, without a head. It is said by some to be the ghost of a Hessian trooper, whose head had been carried away by a cannon-ball, in some nameless battle during the Revolutionary War, and who is ever and anon seen by the country folk hurrying along in the gloom of night, as if on the wings of the wind. His haunts are not confined to the valley, but extend at times to the adjacent roads, and especially to the vicinity of a church at no great distance. Indeed, certain of the most authentic historians of those parts, who have been careful in collecting and collating the floating facts concerning this specter, allege that the body of the trooper having been buried in the churchyard, the ghost rides forth to the scene of battle in nightly quest of his head, and that the rushing speed with which he sometimes passes along the Hollow, like a midnight blast, is owing to his being belated, and in a hurry to get back to the churchyard before daybreak.

Such is the general purport of this legendary superstition, which has furnished materials for many a wild story in that

region of shadows; and the specter is known at all the country firesides, by the name of the Headless Horseman of Sleepy Hollow.

It is remarkable that the visionary propensity I have mentioned is not confined to the native inhabitants of the valley, but is unconsciously imbibed by every one who resides there for a time. However wide awake they may have been before they entered that sleepy region, they are sure, in a little time, to inhale the witching influence of the air, and begin to grow imaginative, to dream dreams, and see apparitions.

I mention this peaceful spot with all possible laud; for it is in such little retired Dutch valleys, found here and there embosomed in the great State of New York, that population, manners, and customs remain fixed, while the great torrent of migration and improvement, which is making such incessant changes in other parts of this restless country, sweeps by them unobserved. They are like those little nooks of still water, which border a rapid stream, where we may see the straw and bubble riding quietly at anchor, or slowly revolving in their mimic harbor, undisturbed by the rush of the passing current. Though many years have elapsed since I trod the drowsy shades of Sleepy Hollow, yet I question whether I should not still find the same trees and the same families vegetating in its sheltered bosom.

In this by-place of nature there abode, in a remote period of American history, that is to say, some thirty years since, a worthy wight of the name of Ichabod Crane, who sojourned, or, as he expressed it, "tarried," in Sleepy Hollow, for the purpose of instructing the children of the vicinity. He was a native of Connecticut, a State which supplies the Union with pioneers for the mind as well as for the forest, and sends forth yearly its legions of frontier woodmen and country schoolmasters. The

cognomen of Crane was not inapplicable to his person. He was tall, but exceedingly lank, with narrow shoulders, long arms and legs, hands that dangled a mile out of his sleeves, feet that might have served for shovels, and his whole frame most loosely hung together. His head was small, and flat at top, with huge ears, large green glassy eyes, and a long snipe nose, so that it looked like a weather-cock perched upon his spindle neck to tell which way the wind blew. To see him striding along the profile of a hill on a windy day, with his clothes bagging and fluttering about him, one might have mistaken him for the genius of famine descending upon the earth, or some scarecrow eloped from a corn-field.

His schoolhouse was a low building of one large room, rudely constructed of logs; the windows partly glazed, and partly patched with leaves of old copy-books. It was most ingeniously secured at vacant hours, by a withe twisted in the handle of the door, and stakes set against the window-shutters; so that though a thief might get in with perfect ease, he would find some embarrassment in getting out,—an idea most probably borrowed by the architect, Yost Van Houten, from the mystery of an eel-pot. The schoolhouse stood in a rather lonely but pleasant situation, just at the foot of a woody hill, with a brook running close by, and a formidable birch-tree growing at one end of it. From hence the low murmur of his pupils' voices, conning over their lessons, might be heard in a drowsy summer's day, like the hum of a beehive; interrupted now and then by the authoritative voice of the master, in the tone of menace or command; or, peradventure, by the appalling sound of the birch, as he urged some tardy loiterer along the flowery path of knowledge. Truth to say, he was a conscientious man, and ever bore in mind the golden maxim, "Spare the rod and spoil the child." Ichabod Crane's scholars certainly were not spoiled.

I would not have it imagined, however, that he was one of those cruel potentates of the school who joy in the smart of their subjects; on the contrary, he administered justice with discrimination rather than severity; taking the burden off the backs of the weak, and laying it on those of the strong. Your mere puny stripling, that winced at the least flourish of the rod, was passed by with indulgence; but the claims of justice were satisfied by inflicting a double portion on some little tough, wrong-headed, broad-skirted Dutch urchin, who sulked and swelled and grew dogged and sullen beneath the birch. All this he called "doing his duty by their parents;" and he never inflicted a chastisement without following it by the assurance, so consolatory to the smarting urchin, that "he would remember it and thank him for it the longest day he had to live."

When school hours were over, he was even the companion and playmate of the larger boys; and on holiday afternoons would convoy some of the smaller ones home, who happened to have pretty sisters, or good housewives for mothers, noted for the comforts of the cupboard. Indeed, it behooved him to keep on good terms with his pupils. The revenue arising from his school was small, and would have been scarcely sufficient to furnish him with daily bread, for he was a huge feeder, and, though lank, had the dilating powers of an anaconda; but to help out his maintenance, he was, according to country custom in those parts, boarded and lodged at the houses of the farmers whose children he instructed. With these he lived successively a week at a time, thus going the rounds of the neighborhood, with all his worldly effects tied up in a cotton handkerchief.

That all this might not be too onerous on the purses of his rustic patrons, who are apt to consider the costs of schooling a grievous burden, and schoolmasters as mere drones, he had various ways of rendering himself both useful and agreeable.

He assisted the farmers occasionally in the lighter labors of their farms, helped to make hay, mended the fences, took the horses to water, drove the cows from pasture, and cut wood for the winter fire. He laid aside, too, all the dominant dignity and absolute sway with which he lorded it in his little empire, the school, and became wonderfully gentle and ingratiating. He found favor in the eyes of the mothers by petting the children, particularly the youngest; and like the lion bold, which whilom so magnanimously the lamb did hold, he would sit with a child on one knee, and rock a cradle with his foot for whole hours together.

In addition to his other vocations, he was the singing-master of the neighborhood, and picked up many bright shillings by instructing the young folks in psalmody. It was a matter of no little vanity to him on Sundays, to take his station in front of the church gallery, with a band of chosen singers; where, in his own mind, he completely carried away the palm from the parson. Certain it is, his voice resounded far above all the rest of the congregation; and there are peculiar quavers still to be heard in that church, and which may even be heard half a mile off, quite to the opposite side of the mill-pond, on a still Sunday morning, which are said to be legitimately descended from the nose of Ichabod Crane. Thus, by divers little makeshifts, in that ingenious way which is commonly denominated "by hook and by crook," the worthy pedagogue got on tolerably enough, and was thought, by all who understood nothing of the labor of headwork, to have a wonderfully easy life of it.

The schoolmaster is generally a man of some importance in the female circle of a rural neighborhood; being considered a kind of idle, gentleman-like personage, of vastly superior taste and accomplishments to the rough country swains, and, indeed, inferior in learning only to the parson. His appearance, there-

fore, is apt to occasion some little stir at the tea-table of a farmhouse, and the addition of a supernumerary dish of cakes or sweetmeats, or, peradventure, the parade of a silver teapot. Our man of letters, therefore, was peculiarly happy in the smiles of all the country damsels. How he would figure among them in the churchyard, between services on Sundays! gathering grapes for them from the wild vines that overran the surrounding trees; reciting for their amusement all the epitaphs on the tombstones; or sauntering, with a whole bevy of them, along the banks of the adjacent mill-pond; while the more bashful country bumpkins hung sheepishly back, envying his superior elegance and address.

From his half-itinerant life, also, he was a kind of traveling gazette, carrying the whole budget of local gossip from house to house, so that his appearance was always greeted with satisfaction. He was, moreover, esteemed by the women as a man of great erudition, for he had read several books quite through, and was a perfect master of Cotton Mather's "History of New England Witchcraft," in which, by the way, he most firmly and potently believed.

He was, in fact, an odd mixture of small shrewdness and simple credulity. His appetite for the marvelous, and his powers of digesting it, were equally extraordinary; and both had been increased by his residence in this spell-bound region. No tale was too gross or monstrous for his capacious swallow. It was often his delight, after his school was dismissed in the afternoon, to stretch himself on the rich bed of clover bordering the little brook that whimpered by his schoolhouse, and there con over old Mather's direful tales, until the gathering dusk of evening made the printed page a mere mist before his eyes. Then, as he wended his way by swamp and stream and awful woodland, to the farmhouse where he happened to be quartered, every

sound of nature, at that witching hour, fluttered his excited imagination,—the moan of the whippoorwill from the hillside, the boding cry of the tree-toad, that harbinger of storm, the dreary hooting of the screech-owl, to the sudden rustling in the thicket of birds frightened from their roost. The fireflies, too, which sparkled most vividly in the darkest places, now and then startled him, as one of uncommon brightness would stream across his path; and if, by chance, a huge blockhead of a beetle came winging his blundering flight against him, the poor varlet was ready to give up the ghost, with the idea that he was struck with a witch's token. His only resource on such occasions, either to drown thought or drive away evil spirits, was to sing psalm tunes; and the good people of Sleepy Hollow, as they sat by their doors of an evening, were often filled with awe at hearing his nasal melody, "in linkëd sweetness long drawn out," floating from the distant hill, or along the dusky road.

Another of his sources of fearful pleasure was to pass long winter evenings with the old Dutch wives, as they sat spinning by the fire, with a row of apples roasting and spluttering along the hearth, and listen to their marvelous tales of ghosts and goblins, and haunted fields, and haunted brooks, and haunted bridges, and haunted houses, and particularly of the headless horseman, or Galloping Hessian of the Hollow, as they sometimes called him. He would delight them equally by his anecdotes of witchcraft, and of the direful omens and portentous sights and sounds in the air, which prevailed in the earlier times of Connecticut; and would frighten them wofully with speculations upon comets and shooting-stars; and with the alarming fact that the world did absolutely turn round, and that they were half the time topsy-turvy!

But if there was a pleasure in all this, while snugly cuddling in the chimney-corner of a chamber that was all of a ruddy glow

from the crackling wood-fire, and where, of course, no specter dared to show its face, it was dearly purchased by the terrors of his subsequent walk homeward. What fearful shapes and shadows beset his path, amidst the dim and ghastly glare of a snowy night! With what wistful look did he eye every trembling ray of light streaming across the waste fields from some distant window! How often was he appalled by some shrub covered with snow, which, like a sheeted specter, beset his very path! How often did he shrink with curdling awe at the sound of his own steps on the frosty crust beneath his feet; and dread to look over his shoulder, lest he should behold some uncouth being tramping close behind him! and how often was he thrown into complete dismay by some rushing blast, howling among the trees, in the idea that it was the Galloping Hessian on one of his nightly scourings!

All these, however, were mere terrors of the night, fantoms of the mind that walk in darkness; and though he had seen many specters in his time, and been more than once beset by Satan in divers shapes in his lonely perambulations, yet daylight put an end to all these evils; and he would have passed a pleasant life of it, in despite of the Devil and all his works, if his path had not been crossed by a being that causes more perplexity to mortal man than ghosts, goblins, and the whole race of witches put together, and that was—a woman.

Among the musical disciples who assembled, one evening in each week, to receive his instructions in psalmody, was Katrina Van Tassel, the daughter and only child of a substantial Dutch farmer. She was a blooming lass of fresh eighteen; plump as a partridge; ripe and melting and rosy-cheeked as one of her father's peaches, and universally famed, not merely for her beauty, but her vast expectations. She was withal a little of a coquette, as might be perceived even in her dress, which was a

mixture of ancient and modern fashions, as most suited to set off her charms. She wore the ornaments of pure yellow gold, which her great-great-grandmother had brought over from Saardam; the tempting stomacher of the olden time, and withal a provokingly short petticoat, to display the prettiest foot and ankle in the country round.

Ichabod Crane had a soft and foolish heart toward the sex; and it is not to be wondered at, that so tempting a morsel soon found favor in his eyes, more especially after he had visited her in her paternal mansion. Old Baltus Van Tassel was a perfect picture of a thriving, contented, liberal-hearted farmer. He seldom, it is true, sent either his eyes or his thoughts beyond the boundaries of his own farm; but within those everything was snug, happy and well-conditioned. He was satisfied with his wealth, but not proud of it; and piqued himself upon the hearty abundance, rather than the style in which he lived. His stronghold was situated on the banks of the Hudson, in one of those green, sheltered, fertile nooks in which the Dutch farmers are so fond of nestling. A great elm-tree spread its broad branches over it, at the foot of which bubbled up a spring of the softest and sweetest water, in a little well formed of a barrel; and then stole sparkling away through the grass, to a neighboring brook, that babbled along among alders and dwarf-willows. Hard by the farmhouse was a vast barn, that might have served for a church; every window and crevice of which seemed bursting forth with the treasures of the farm; the flail was busily resounding within it from morning to night; swallows and martins skimmed twittering about the eaves; and rows of pigeons, some with one eye turned up, as if watching the weather, some with their heads under their wings or buried in their bosoms, and others swelling, and cooing, and bowing about their dames, were enjoying the sunshine on the roof. Sleek unwieldy pork-

ers were grunting in the repose and abundance of their pens, from whence sallied forth, now and then, troops of sucking pigs, as if to snuff the air. A stately squadron of snowy geese were riding in an adjoining pond, convoying whole fleets of ducks; regiments of turkeys were gobbling through the farmyard, and Guinea fowls fretting about it, like ill-tempered housewives, with their peevish, discontented cry. Before the barn-door strutted the gallant cock, that pattern of a husband, a warrior and a fine gentleman, clapping his burnished wings and crowing in the pride and gladness of his heart,—sometimes tearing up the earth with his feet, and then generously calling his ever-hungry family of wives and children to enjoy the rich morsel which he had discovered.

The pedagogue's mouth watered as he looked upon this sumptuous promise of luxurious winter fare. In his devouring mind's eye, he pictured to himself every roasting-pig running about with a pudding in his belly, and an apple in his mouth; the pigeons were snugly put to bed in a comfortable pie, and tucked in with a coverlet of crust; the geese were swimming in their own gravy; and the ducks pairing cosily in dishes, like snug married couples, with a decent competency of onion sauce. In the porkers he saw carved out the future sleek side of bacon, and juicy relishing ham; not a turkey but he beheld daintily trussed up, with its gizzard under its wing, and, peradventure, a necklace of savory sausages; and even bright chanticleer himself lay sprawling on his back, in a side dish, with uplifted claws, as if craving that quarter which his chivalrous spirit disdained to ask while living.

As the enraptured Ichabod fancied all this, and as he rolled his great green eyes over the fat meadow-lands, the rich fields of wheat, of rye, of buckwheat, and Indian corn, and the orchards burdened with ruddy fruit, which surrounded the warm tene-

ment of Van Tassel, his heart yearned after the damsel who was to inherit these domains, and his imagination expanded with the idea, how they might be readily turned into cash, and the money invested in immense tracts of wild land, and shingle palaces in the wilderness. Nay, his busy fancy already realized his hopes, and presented to him the blooming Katrina, with a whole family of children, mounted on the top of a wagon loaded with household trumpery, with pots and kettles dangling beneath; and he beheld himself bestriding a pacing mare, with a colt at her heels, setting out for Kentucky, Tennessee,—or the Lord knows where!

When he entered the house, the conquest of his heart was complete. It was one of those spacious farmhouses, with high-ridged but lowly sloping roofs, built in the style handed down from the first Dutch settlers; the low projecting eaves forming a piazza along the front, capable of being closed up in bad weather. Under this were hung flails, harness, various utensils of husbandry, and nets for fishing in the neighboring river. Benches were built along the sides for summer use; and a great spinning-wheel at one end, and a churn at the other, showed the various uses to which this important porch might be devoted. From this piazza the wondering Ichabod entered the hall, which formed the center of the mansion, and the place of usual residence. Here rows of resplendent pewter, ranged on a long dresser, dazzled his eyes. In one corner stood a huge bag of wool, ready to be spun; in another, a quantity of linsey-woolsey just from the loom; ears of Indian corn, and strings of dried apples and peaches, hung in gay festoons along the walls, mingled with the gaud of red peppers; and a door left ajar gave him a peep into the best parlor, where the claw-footed chairs and dark mahogany tables shone like mirrors; andirons, with their accompanying shovel and tongs, glistened from their covert of

asparagus tops; mock-oranges and conch-shells decorated the mantelpiece; strings of various-colored birds' eggs were suspended above it; a great ostrich egg was hung from the center of the room, and a corner cupboard, knowingly left open, displayed immense treasures of old silver and well-mended china.

From the moment Ichabod laid his eyes upon these regions of delight, the peace of his mind was at an end, and his only study was how to gain the affections of the peerless daughter of Van Tassel. In this enterprise, however, he had more real difficulties than generally fell to the lot of a knight-errant of yore, who seldom had anything but giants, enchanters, fiery dragons, and such like easily conquered adversaries, to contend with, and had to make his way merely through gates of iron and brass, and walls of adamant to the castle keep, where the lady of his heart was confined; all which he achieved as easily as a man would carve his way to the center of a Christmas pie; and then the lady gave him her hand as a matter of course. Ichabod, on the contrary, had to win his way to the heart of a country coquette, beset with a labyrinth of whims and caprices, which were forever presenting new difficulties and impediments; and he had to encounter a host of fearful adversaries of real flesh and blood, the numerous rustic admirers, who beset every portal to her heart, keeping a watchful and angry eye upon each other, but ready to fly out in the common cause against any new competitor.

Among these, the most formidable was a burly, roaring, roystering blade, of the name of Abraham, or, according to the Dutch abbreviation, Brom Van Brunt, the hero of the country round, which rang with his feats of strength and hardihood. He was broad-shouldered and double-jointed, with short curly black hair, and a bluff but not unpleasant countenance, having a mingled air of fun and arrogance. From his Herculean frame

and great powers of limb, he had received the nickname of BROM BONES, by which he was universally known. He was famed for great knowledge and skill in horsemanship, being as dexterous on horseback as a Tartar. He was foremost at all races and cock-fights; and, with the ascendancy which bodily strength always acquires in rustic life, was the umpire in all disputes, setting his hat on one side, and giving his decisions with an air and tone that admitted of no gainsay or appeal. He was always ready for either a fight or a frolic; but had more mischief than ill-will in his composition; and with all his overbearing roughness, there was a strong dash of waggish good humor at bottom. He had three or four boon companions, who regarded him as their model, and at the head of whom he scoured the country, attending every scene of feud or merriment for miles round. In cold weather he was distinguished by a fur cap, surmounted with a flaunting fox's tail; and when the folks at a country gathering descried this well-known crest at a distance, whisking about among a squad of hard riders, they always stood by for a squall. Sometimes his crew would be heard dashing along past the farmhouses at midnight, with whoop and halloo, like a troop of Don Cossacks; and the old dames, startled out of their sleep, would listen for a moment till the hurry-scurry had clattered by, and then exclaim, "Aye, there goes Brom Bones and his gang!" The neighbors looked upon him with a mixture of awe, admiration, and good-will; and, when any madcap prank or rustic brawl occurred in the vicinity, always shook their heads, and warranted Brom Bones was at the bottom of it.

This rantipole hero had for some time singled out the blooming Katrina for the object of his uncouth gallantries, and though his amorous toyings were something like the gentle caresses and endearments of a bear, yet it was whispered that she did not altogether discourage his hopes. Certain it is, his advances

were signals for rival candidates to retire, who felt no inclination to cross a lion in his amours; insomuch, that when his horse was seen tied to Van Tassel's paling, on a Sunday night, a sure sign that his master was courting, or, as it is termed, "sparking," within, all other suitors passed by in despair, and carried the war into other quarters.

Such was the formidable rival with whom Ichabod Crane had to contend, and, considering all things, a stouter man than he would have shrunk from the competition, and a wiser man would have despaired. He had, however, a happy mixture of pliability and perseverance in his nature; he was in form and spirit like a supple-jack—yielding, but tough; though he bent, he never broke; and though he bowed beneath the slightest pressure, yet, the moment it was away—jerk!—he was as erect, and carried his head as high as ever.

To have taken the field openly against his rival would have been madness; for he was not a man to be thwarted in his amours, any more than that stormy lover, Achilles. Ichabod, therefore, made his advances in a quiet and gently insinuating manner. Under cover of his character of singing-master, he made frequent visits at the farmhouse; not that he had anything to apprehend from the meddlesome interference of parents, which is so often a stumbling-block in the path of lovers. Balt Van Tassel was an easy, indulgent soul; he loved his daughter better even than his pipe, and, like a reasonable man and an excellent father, let her have her way in everything. His notable little wife, too, had enough to do to attend to her housekeeping and manage her poultry; for, as she sagely observed, ducks and geese are foolish things, and must be looked after, but girls can take care of themselves. Thus, while the busy dame bustled about the house, or plied her spinning-wheel at one end of the piazza, honest Balt would sit smoking his evening

pipe at the other, watching the achievements of a little wooden warrior, who, armed with a sword in each hand, was most valiantly fighting the wind on the pinnacle of the barn. In the meantime, Ichabod would carry on his suit with the daughter by the side of the spring under the great elm, or sauntering along in the twilight, that hour so favorable to the lover's eloquence.

I profess not to know how women's hearts are wooed and won. To me they have always been matters of riddle and admiration. Some seem to have but one vulnerable point, or door of access; while others have a thousand avenues, and may be captured in a thousand different ways. It is a great triumph of skill to gain the former, but a still greater proof of generalship to maintain possession of the latter, for a man must battle for his fortress at every door and window. He who wins a thousand common hearts is therefore entitled to some renown; but he who keeps undisputed sway over the heart of a coquette is indeed a hero. Certain it is, this was not the case with the redoubtable Brom Bones; and from the moment Ichabod Crane made his advances, the interests of the former evidently declined: his horse was no longer seen tied at the palings on Sunday nights, and a deadly feud gradually arose between him and the preceptor of Sleepy Hollow.

Brom, who had a degree of rough chivalry in his nature, would fain have carried matters to open warfare and have settled their pretensions to the lady, according to the mode of those most concise and simple reasoners, the knights-errant of yore,—by single combat; but Ichabod was too conscious of the superior might of his adversary to enter the lists against him; he had overheard a boast of Bones, that he would "double the schoolmaster up, and lay him on a shelf of his own schoolhouse;" and he was too wary to give him an opportunity. There was something extremely provoking in this obstinately pacific system;

it left Brom no alternative but to draw upon the funds of rustic waggery in his disposition, and to play off boorish practical jokes upon his rival. Ichabod became the object of whimsical persecution to Bones and his gang of rough riders. They harried his hitherto peaceful domains, smoked out his singing-school by stopping up the chimney, broke into the schoolhouse at night, in spite of its formidable fastenings of withe and window-stakes, and turned everything topsy-turvy, so that the poor schoolmaster began to think all the witches in the country held their meetings there. But what was still more annoying, Brom took all opportunities of turning him into ridicule in presence of his mistress, and had a scoundrel dog whom he taught to whine in the most ludicrous manner, and introduced as a rival of Ichabod's, to instruct her in psalmody.

In this way matters went on for some time, without producing any material effect on the relative situations of the contending powers. On a fine autumnal afternoon, Ichabod, in pensive mood, sat enthroned on the lofty stool from whence he usually watched all the concerns of his little literary realm. In his hand he swayed a ferule, that scepter of despotic power; the birch of justice reposed on three nails behind the throne, a constant terror to evil-doers; while on the desk before him might be seen sundry contraband articles and prohibited weapons, detected upon the persons of idle urchins, such as half-munched apples, popguns, whirligigs, fly-cages, and whole legions of rampant little paper game-cocks. Apparently there had been some appalling act of justice recently inflicted, for his scholars were all busily intent upon their books, or slyly whispering behind them with one eye kept upon the master; and a kind of buzzing stillness reigned throughout the schoolroom. It was suddenly interrupted by the appearance of a negro in tow-cloth jacket and trousers, a round-crowned fragment of a hat, like the cap of

Mercury, and mounted on the back of a ragged, wild, half-broken colt, which he managed with a rope by way of halter. He came clattering up to the school-door with an invitation to Ichabod to attend a merry-making or "quilting-frolic," to be held that evening at Mynheer Van Tassel's; and having delivered his message with that air of importance and effort at fine language which a negro is apt to display on petty embassies of the kind, he dashed over the brook, and was seen scampering away up the Hollow, full of the importance and hurry of his mission.

All was now bustle and hubbub in the late quiet schoolroom. The scholars were hurried through their lessons without stopping at trifles; those who were nimble skipped over half with impunity, and those who were tardy had a smart application now and then in the rear, to quicken their speed or help them over a tall word. Books were flung aside without being put away on the shelves, inkstands were overturned, benches thrown down, and the whole school was turned loose an hour before the usual time, bursting forth like a legion of young imps, yelping and racketing about the green in joy at their early emancipation.

The gallant Ichabod now spent at least an extra half hour at his toilet, brushing and furbishing up his best, and indeed only suit of rusty black, and arranging his locks by a bit of broken looking-glass that hung up in the schoolhouse. That he might make his appearance before his mistress in the true style of a cavalier, he borrowed a horse from the farmer with whom he was domiciliated, a choleric old Dutchman of the name of Hans Van Ripper, and, thus gallantly mounted, issued forth like a knight-errant in quest of adventures. But it is meet I should, in the true spirit of romantic story, give some account of the looks and equipments of my hero and his steed. The animal he

bestrode was a broken-down plow-horse, that had outlived almost everything but its viciousness. He was gaunt and shagged, with a ewe neck, and a head like a hammer; his rusty mane and tail were tangled and knotted with burs; one eye had lost its pupil, and was glaring and spectral, but the other had the gleam of a genuine devil in it. Still he must have had fire and mettle in his day, if we may judge from the name he bore of Gunpowder. He had, in fact, been a favorite steed of his master's, the choleric Van Ripper, who was a furious rider, and had infused, very probably, some of his own spirit into the animal; for, old and broken-down as he looked, there was more of the lurking devil in him than in any young filly in the country.

Ichabod was a suitable figure for such a steed. He rode with short stirrups, which brought his knees nearly up to the pommel of the saddle; his sharp elbows stuck out like grasshoppers'; he carried his whip perpendicularly in his hand, like a scepter, and as his horse jogged on, the motion of his arms was not unlike the flapping of a pair of wings. A small wool hat rested on the top of his nose, for so his scanty strip of forehead might be called, and the skirts of his black coat fluttered out almost to the horse's tail. Such was the appearance of Ichabod and his steed as they shambled out of the gate of Hans Van Ripper, and it was altogether such an apparition as is seldom to be met with in broad daylight.

It was, as I have said, a fine autumnal day; the sky was clear and serene, and nature wore that rich and golden livery which we always associate with the idea of abundance. The forests had put on their sober brown and yellow, while some trees of the tenderer kind had been nipped by the frosts into brilliant dyes of orange, purple, and scarlet. Streaming files of wild ducks began to make their appearance high in the air; the bark of the squirrel might be heard from the groves of beech and hickory-

nuts, and the pensive whistle of the quail at intervals from the neighboring stubble-field.

The small birds were taking their farewell banquets. In the fulness of their revelry, they fluttered, chirping and frolicking from bush to bush, and tree to tree, capricious from the very profusion and variety around them. There was the honest cock-robin, the favorite game of stripling sportsmen, with its loud querulous note; and the twittering blackbirds flying in sable clouds; and the golden-winged woodpecker, with its crimson crest, his broad black gorget, and splendid plumage; and the cedar-bird, with its red-tipped wings and yellow-tipped tail and its little monteiro cap of feathers; and the blue jay, that noisy coxcomb, in his gay light-blue coat and white underclothes, screaming and chattering, nodding and bobbing and bowing, and pretending to be on good terms with every songster of the grove.

As Ichabod jogged slowly on his way, his eye, ever open to every symptom of culinary abundance, ranged with delight over the treasures of jolly autumn. On all sides he beheld vast store of apples: some hanging in oppressive opulence on the trees; some gathered into baskets and barrels for the market; others heaped up in rich piles for the cider-press. Farther on he beheld great fields of Indian corn, with its golden ears peeping from their leafy coverts, and holding out the promise of cakes and hasty-pudding; and the yellow pumpkins lying beneath them, turning up their fair round bellies to the sun, and giving ample prospects of the most luxurious of pies; and anon he passed the fragrant buckwheat fields breathing the odor of the beehive, and as he beheld them, soft anticipations stole over his mind of dainty slap-jacks, well-buttered, and garnished with honey or treacle, by the delicate little dimpled hand of Katrina Van Tassel.

Thus feeding his mind with many sweet thoughts and "sugared suppositions," he journeyed along the sides of a range of hills which look out upon some of the goodliest scenes of the mighty Hudson. The sun gradually wheeled his broad disk down in the west. The wide bosom of the Tappan Zee lay motionless and glassy, excepting that here and there a gentle undulation waved and prolonged the blue shadow of the distant mountain. A few amber clouds floated in the sky, without a breath of air to move them. The horizon was of a fine golden tint, changing gradually into a pure apple-green, and from that into the deep blue of the mid-heaven. A slanting ray lingered on the woody crests of the precipices that overhung some parts of the river, giving greater depth to the dark gray and purple of their rocky sides. A sloop was loitering in the distance, dropping slowly down with the tide, her sail hanging uselessly against the mast; and as the reflection of the sky gleamed along the still water, it seemed as if the vessel was suspended in the air.

It was toward evening that Ichabod arrived at the castle of the Herr Van Tassel, which he found thronged with the pride and flower of the adjacent country. Old farmers, a spare leathern-faced race, in homespun coats and breeches, blue stockings, huge shoes, and magnificent pewter buckles. Their brisk, withered little dames, in close-crimped caps, long-waisted short gowns, homespun petticoats, with scissors and pin-cushions, and gay calico pockets hanging on the outside. Buxom lassies, almost as antiquated as their mothers, excepting where a straw hat, a fine ribbon, or perhaps a white frock, gave symptoms of city innovation. The sons, in short square-skirted coats, with rows of stupendous brass buttons, and their hair generally queued in the fashion of the times, especially if they could procure an eelskin for the purpose, it being esteemed throughout the country as a potent nourisher and strengthener of the hair.

Brom Bones, however, was the hero of the scene, having come to the gathering on his favorite steed Daredevil, a creature, like himself, full of mettle and mischief, and which no one but himself could manage. He was, in fact, noted for preferring vicious animals, given to all kinds of tricks which kept the rider in constant risk of his neck, for he held a tractable, well-broken horse as unworthy of a lad of spirit.

Fain would I pause to dwell upon the world of charms that burst upon the enraptured gaze of my hero, as he entered the state parlor of Van Tassel's mansion. Not those of the bevy of buxom lasses, with their luxurious display of red and white; but the ample charms of a genuine Dutch country tea-table, in the sumptuous time of autumn. Such heaped-up platters of cakes of various and almost indescribable kinds, known only to experienced Dutch housewives! There was the doughty doughnut, the tender olykoek, and the crisp and crumbling cruller; sweet cakes and short cakes, ginger cakes and honey cakes, and the whole family of cakes. And then there were apple-pies, and peach-pies, and pumpkin-pies; besides slices of ham and smoked beef; and moreover delectable dishes of preserved plums, and peaches, and pears, and quinces; not to mention broiled shad and roasted chickens; together with bowls of milk and cream, all mingled higgledy-piggledy, pretty much as I have enumerated them, with the motherly teapot sending up its clouds of vapor from the midst—Heaven bless the mark! I want breath and time to discuss this banquet as it deserves, and am too eager to get on with my story. Happily, Ichabod Crane was not in so great a hurry as his historian, but did ample justice to every dainty.

He was a kind and thankful creature, whose heart dilated in proportion as his skin was filled with good cheer, and whose spirits rose with eating, as some men's do with drink. He could

not help, too, rolling his large eyes round him as he ate, and chuckling with the possibility that he might one day be lord of all this scene of almost unimaginable luxury and splendor. Then, he thought, how soon he'd turn his back upon the old schoolhouse; snap his fingers in the face of Hans Van Ripper, and every other niggardly patron, and kick any itinerant pedagogue out of doors that should dare to call him comrade!

Old Baltus Van Tassel moved about among his guests with a face dilated with content and good humor, round and jolly as the harvest moon. His hospitable attentions were brief, but expressive, being confined to a shake of the hand, a slap on the shoulder, a loud laugh, and a pressing invitation to "fall to, and help themselves."

And now the sound of the music from the common room, or hall, summoned to the dance. The musician was an old gray-headed negro, who had been the itinerant orchestra of the neighborhood for more than half a century. His instrument was as old and battered as himself. The greater part of the time he scraped on two or three strings, accompanying every movement of the bow with a motion of the head; bowing almost to the ground, and stamping with his foot whenever a fresh couple were to start.

Ichabod prided himself upon his dancing as much as upon his vocal powers. Not a limb, not a fiber about him was idle; and to have seen his loosely hung frame in full motion, and clattering about the room, you would have thought St. Vitus himself, that blessed patron of the dance, was figuring before you in person. He was the admiration of all the negroes; who, having gathered, of all ages and sizes, from the farm and the neighborhood, stood forming a pyramid of shining black faces at every door and window; gazing with delight at the scene;

rolling their white eyeballs, and showing grinning rows of ivory from ear to ear. How could the flogger of urchins be otherwise than animated and joyous? the lady of his heart was his partner in the dance, and smiling graciously in reply to all his amorous oglings; while Brom Bones, sorely smitten with love and jealousy, sat brooding by himself in one corner.

When the dance was at an end, Ichabod was attracted to a knot of the sager folks, who, with Old Van Tassel, sat smoking at one end of the piazza, gossiping over former times, and drawing out long stories about the war.

This neighborhood, at the time of which I am speaking, was one of those highly favored places which abound with chronicle and great men. The British and American line had run near it during the war; it had, therefore, been the scene of marauding, and infested with refugees, cowboys, and all kinds of border chivalry. Just sufficient time had elapsed to enable each story-teller to dress up his tale with a little becoming fiction, and, in the indistinctness of his recollection, to make himself the hero of every exploit.

There was the story of Doffue Martling, a large blue-bearded Dutchman, who had nearly taken a British frigate with an old iron nine-pounder from a mud breastwork, only that his gun burst at the sixth discharge. And there was an old gentleman who shall be nameless, being too rich a mynheer to be lightly mentioned, who, in the battle of White Plains, being an excellent master of defense, parried a musket-ball with a small-sword, insomuch that he absolutely felt it whizz round the blade, and glance off at the hilt; in proof of which he was ready at any time to show the sword, with the hilt a little bent. There were several more that had been equally great in the field, not one of whom but was persuaded that he had a considerable hand in bringing the war to a happy termination.

But all these were nothing to the tales of ghosts and apparitions that succeeded. The neighborhood is rich in legendary treasures of the kind. Local tales and superstitions thrive best in these sheltered, long-settled retreats; but are trampled under foot by the shifting throng that forms the population of most of our country places. Besides, there is no encouragement for ghosts in most of our villages, for they have scarcely had time to finish their first nap and turn themselves in their graves, before their surviving friends have traveled away from the neighborhood; so that when they turn out at night to walk their rounds, they have no acquaintance left to call upon. This is perhaps the reason why we so seldom hear of ghosts except in our long-established Dutch communities.

The immediate cause, however, of the prevalence of supernatural stories in these parts, was doubtless owing to the vicinity of Sleepy Hollow. There was a contagion in the very air that blew from that haunted region; it breathed forth an atmosphere of dreams and fancies infecting all the land. Several of the Sleepy Hollow people were present at Van Tassel's, and, as usual, were doling out their wild and wonderful legends. Many dismal tales were told about funeral trains, and mourning cries and wailings heard and seen about the great tree where the unfortunate Major André was taken, and which stood in the neighborhood. Some mention was made also of the woman in white, that haunted the dark glen at Raven Rock, and was often heard to shriek on winter nights before a storm, having perished there in the snow. The chief part of the stories, however, turned upon the favorite specter of Sleepy Hollow, the Headless Horseman, who had been heard several times of late, patroling the country; and, it was said, tethered his horse nightly among the graves in the churchyard.

The sequestered situation of this church seems always to have

made it a favorite haunt of troubled spirits. It stands on a knoll, surrounded by locust-trees and lofty elms, from among which its decent, whitewashed walls shine modestly forth, like Christian purity beaming through the shades of retirement. A gentle slope descends from it to a silver sheet of water, bordered by high trees, between which peeps may be caught at the blue hills of the Hudson. To look upon its grass-grown yard, where the sunbeams seem to sleep so quietly, one would think that there at least the dead might rest in peace. On one side of the church extends a wide woody dell, along which raves a large brook among broken rocks and trunks of fallen trees. Over a deep black part of the stream, not far from the church, was formerly thrown a wooden bridge; the road that led to it, and the bridge itself, were thickly shaded by overhanging trees, which cast a gloom about it, even in the daytime; but occasioned a fearful darkness at night. Such was one of the favorite haunts of the Headless Horseman, and the place where he was most frequently encountered. The tale was told of old Brouwer, a most heretical disbeliever in ghosts, how he met the Horseman returning from his foray into Sleepy Hollow, and was obliged to get up behind him; how they galloped over bush and brake, over hill and swamp, until they reached the bridge; when the Horseman suddenly turned into a skeleton, threw old Brouwer into the brook, and sprang away over the tree-tops with a clap of thunder.

This story was immediately matched by a thrice marvelous adventure of Brom Bones, who made light of the Galloping Hessian as an arrant jockey. He affirmed that on returning one night from the neighboring village of Sing Sing, he had been overtaken by this midnight trooper; that he had offered to race with him for a bowl of punch, and should have won it too, for Daredevil beat the goblin horse all hollow, but just as they

came to the church bridge, the Hessian bolted, and vanished in a flash of fire.

All these tales, told in that drowsy undertone with which men talk in the dark, the countenances of the listeners only now and then receiving a casual gleam from the glare of a pipe, sank deep in the mind of Ichabod. He repaid them in kind with large extracts from his invaluable author, Cotton Mather, and added many marvelous events that had taken place in his native State of Connecticut, and fearful sights which he had seen in his nightly walks about Sleepy Hollow.

The revel now gradually broke up. The old farmers gathered together their families in their wagons, and were heard for some time rattling along the hollow roads, and over the distant hills. Some of the damsels mounted on pillions behind their favorite swains, and their light-hearted laughter, mingling with the clatter of hoofs, echoed along the silent woodlands, sounding fainter and fainter, until they gradually died away,—and the late scene of noise and frolic was all silent and deserted. Ichabod only lingered behind, according to the custom of country lovers, to have a tête-à-tête with the heiress; fully convinced that he was now on the high road to success. What passed at this interview I will not pretend to say, for in fact I do not know. Something, however, I fear me, must have gone wrong, for he certainly sallied forth, after no very great interval, with an air quite desolate and chapfallen. Oh, these women! these women! Could that girl have been playing off any of her coquettish tricks? Was her encouragement of the poor pedagogue all a mere sham to secure her conquest of his rival? Heaven only knows, not I! Let it suffice to say, Ichabod stole forth with the air of one who had been sacking a henroost, rather than a fair lady's heart. Without looking to the right or left to notice the scene of rural wealth, on which he had

so often gloated, he went straight to the stable, and with several hearty cuffs and kicks roused his steed most uncourteously from the comfortable quarters in which he was soundly sleeping, dreaming of mountains of corn and oats, and whole valleys of timothy and clover.

It was the very witching time of night that Ichabod, heavy-hearted and crestfallen, pursued his travels homeward, along the sides of the lofty hills which rise above Tarry Town, and which he had traversed so cheerily in the afternoon. The hour was as dismal as himself. Far below him the Tappan Zee spread its dusky and indistinct waste of waters, with here and there the tall mast of a sloop, riding quietly at anchor under the land. In the dead hush of midnight, he could even hear the barking of the watch-dog from the opposite shore of the Hudson; but it was so vague and faint as only to give an idea of his distance from this faithful companion of man. Now and then, too, the long-drawn crowing of a cock, accidentally awakened, would sound far, far off, from some farmhouse away among the hills—but it was like a dreaming sound in his ear. No signs of life occurred near him, but occasionally the melancholy chirp of a cricket, or perhaps the guttural twang of a bullfrog from a neighboring marsh, as if sleeping uncomfortably and turning suddenly in his bed.

All the stories of ghosts and goblins that he had heard in the afternoon now came crowding upon his recollection. The night grew darker and darker; the stars seemed to sink deeper in the sky, and driving clouds occasionally hid them from his sight. He had never felt so lonely and dismal. He was, moreover, approaching the very place where many of the scenes of the ghost stories had been laid. In the center of the road stood an enormous tulip-tree, which towered like a giant above all the other trees of the neighborhood, and formed a kind of land-

mark. Its limbs were gnarled and fantastic, large enough to form trunks for ordinary trees, twisting down almost to the earth, and rising again into the air. It was connected with the tragical story of the unfortunate André, who had been taken prisoner hard by; and was universally known by the name of Major André's tree. The common people regarded it with a mixture of respect and superstition, partly out of sympathy for the fate of its ill-starred namesake, and partly from the tales of strange sights, and doleful lamentations, told concerning it.

As Ichabod approached this fearful tree, he began to whistle; he thought his whistle was answered; it was but a blast sweeping sharply through the dry branches. As he approached a little nearer, he thought he saw something white, hanging in the midst of the tree: he paused, and ceased whistling; but, on looking more narrowly, perceived that it was a place where the tree had been scathed by lightning, and the white wood laid bare. Suddenly he heard a groan—his teeth chattered, and his knees smote against the saddle: it was but the rubbing of one huge bough upon another, as they were swayed about by the breeze. He passed the tree in safety, but new perils lay before him.

About two hundred yards from the tree, a small brook crossed the road, and ran into a marshy and thickly-wooded glen, known by the name of Wiley's Swamp. A few rough logs, laid side by side, served for a bridge over this stream. On that side of the road where the brook entered the wood, a group of oaks and chestnuts, matted thick with wild grape-vines, threw a cavernous gloom over it. To pass this bridge was the severest trial. It was at this identical spot that the unfortunate André was captured, and under the covert of those chestnuts and vines were the sturdy yeomen concealed who surprised him. This has ever since been considered a haunted stream, and fearful are the feelings of the schoolboy who has to pass it alone after dark.

As he approached the stream, his heart began to thump; he summoned up, however, all his resolution, gave his horse half a score of kicks in the ribs, and attempted to dash briskly across the bridge; but instead of starting forward, the perverse old animal made a lateral movement, and ran broadside against the fence. Ichabod, whose fears increased with the delay, jerked the reins on the other side, and kicked lustily with the contrary foot: it was all in vain; his steed started, it is true, but it was only to plunge to the opposite side of the road into a thicket of brambles and alder-bushes. The schoolmaster now bestowed both whip and heel upon the starveling ribs of old Gunpowder, who dashed forward, snuffling and snorting, but came to a stand just by the bridge, with a suddenness that had nearly sent his rider sprawling over his head. Just at this moment a plashy tramp by the side of the bridge caught the sensitive ear of Ichabod. In the dark shadow of the grove, on the margin of the brook, he beheld something huge, misshapen, and towering. It stirred not, but seemed gathered up in the gloom, like some gigantic monster ready to spring upon the traveler.

The hair of the affrighted pedagogue rose upon his head with terror. What was to be done? To turn and fly was now too late; and besides, what chance was there of escaping ghost or goblin, if such it was, which could ride upon the wings of the wind? Summoning up, therefore, a show of courage, he demanded in stammering accents, "Who are you?" He received no reply. He repeated his demand in a still more agitated voice. Still there was no answer. Once more he cudgeled the sides of the inflexible Gunpowder, and, shutting his eyes, broke forth with involuntary fervor into a psalm tune. Just then the shadowy object of alarm put itself in motion, and with a scramble and a bound stood at once in the middle of the road. Though

the night was dark and dismal, yet the form of the unknown might now in some degree be ascertained. He appeared to be a horseman of large dimensions, and mounted on a black horse of powerful frame. He made no offer of molestation or sociability, but kept aloof on one side of the road, jogging along on the blind side of old Gunpowder, who had now got over his fright and waywardness.

Ichabod, who had no relish for this strange midnight companion, and bethought himself of the adventure of Brom Bones with the Galloping Hessian, now quickened his steed in hopes of leaving him behind. The stranger, however, quickened his horse to an equal pace. Ichabod pulled up, and fell into a walk, thinking to lag behind,—the other did the same. His heart began to sink within him; he endeavored to resume his psalm tune, but his parched tongue clove to the roof of his mouth, and he could not utter a stave. There was something in the moody and dogged silence of this pertinacious companion that was mysterious and appalling. It was soon fearfully accounted for. On mounting a rising ground, which brought the figure of his fellow-traveler in relief against the sky, gigantic in height, and muffled in a cloak, Ichabod was horror-struck on perceiving that he was headless! but his horror was still more increased on observing that the head, which should have rested on his shoulders, was carried before him on the pommel of his saddle! His terror rose to desperation; he rained a shower of kicks and blows upon Gunpowder, hoping by a sudden movement to give his companion the slip; but the specter started full jump with him. Away, then, they dashed through thick and thin; stones flying and sparks flashing at every bound. Ichabod's flimsy garments fluttered in the air, as he stretched his long lank body away over his horse's head, in the eagerness of his flight.

They had now reached the road which turns off to Sleepy Hollow; but Gunpowder, who seemed possessed with a demon, instead of keeping up it, made an opposite turn, and plunged headlong down hill to the left. This road leads through a sandy hollow, shaded by trees for about a quarter of a mile, where it crosses the bridge famous in goblin story; and just beyond swells the green knoll on which stands the whitewashed church.

As yet the panic of the steed had given his unskilful rider an apparent advantage in the chase; but just as he had got half way through the hollow, the girths of the saddle gave way, and he felt it slipping from under him. He seized it by the pommel, and endeavored to hold it firm, but in vain; and had just time to save himself by clasping old Gunpowder round the neck, when the saddle fell to the earth, and he heard it trampled under foot by his pursuer. For a moment the terror of Hans Van Ripper's wrath passed across his mind,—for it was his Sunday saddle; but this was no time for petty fears; the goblin was hard on his haunches; and (unskilful rider that he was!) he had much ado to maintain his seat; sometimes slipping on one side, sometimes on another, and sometimes jolted on the high ridge of his horse's backbone, with a violence that he verily feared would cleave him asunder.

An opening in the trees now cheered him with the hopes that the church bridge was at hand. The wavering reflection of a silver star in the bosom of the brook told him that he was not mistaken. He saw the walls of the church dimly glaring under the trees beyond. He recollected the place where Brom Bones' ghostly competitor had disappeared. "If I can but reach that bridge," thought Ichabod, "I am safe." Just then he heard the black steed panting and blowing close behind him; he even fancied that he felt his hot breath. Another convulsive kick in

the ribs, and old Gunpowder sprang upon the bridge; he thundered over the resounding planks; he gained the opposite side; and now Ichabod cast a look behind to see if his pursuer should vanish, according to rule, in a flash of fire and brimstone. Just then he saw the goblin rising in his stirrups, and in the very act of hurling his head at him. Ichabod endeavored to dodge the horrible missile, but too late. It encountered his cranium with a tremendous crash,—he was tumbled headlong into the dust, and Gunpowder, the black steed, and the goblin rider, passed by like a whirlwind.

The next morning the old horse was found without his saddle, and with the bridle under his feet, soberly cropping the grass at his master's gate. Ichabod did not make his appearance at breakfast; dinner-hour came, but no Ichabod. The boys assembled at the schoolhouse, and strolled idly about the banks of the brook; but no schoolmaster. Hans Van Ripper now began to feel some uneasiness about the fate of poor Ichabod, and his saddle. An inquiry was set on foot, and after diligent investigation they came upon his traces. In one part of the road leading to the church was found the saddle trampled in the dirt; the tracks of horses' hoofs deeply dented in the road, and evidently at furious speed, were traced to the bridge, beyond which, on the bank of a broad part of the brook, where the water ran deep and black, was found the hat of the unfortunate Ichabod, and close beside it a shattered pumpkin.

The brook was searched, but the body of the schoolmaster was not to be discovered. Hans Van Ripper, as executor of his estate, examined the bundle which contained all his worldly effects. They consisted of two shirts and a half; two stocks for the neck; a pair or two of worsted stockings; an old pair of corduroy small-clothes; a rusty razor; a book of psalm tunes full of dog's-ears; and a broken pitch-pipe. As to the books

and furniture of the schoolhouse, they belonged to the community, excepting Cotton Mather's "History of Witchcraft," a New England "Almanac," and a book of dreams and fortune-telling; in which last was a sheet of foolscap much scribbled and blotted in several fruitless attempts to make a copy of verses in honor of the heiress of Van Tassel. These magic books and the poetic scrawl were forthwith consigned to the flames by Hans Van Ripper; who, from that time forward, determined to send his children no more to school; observing that he never knew any good come of this same reading and writing. Whatever money the schoolmaster possessed, and he had received his quarter's pay but a day or two before, he must have had about his person at the time of his disappearance.

The mysterious event caused much speculation at the church on the following Sunday. Knots of gazers and gossips were collected in the churchyard, at the bridge, and at the spot where the hat and pumpkin had been found. The stories of Brouwer, of Bones, and a whole budget of others were called to mind; and when they had diligently considered them all, and compared them with the symptoms of the present case, they shook their heads, and came to the conclusion that Ichabod had been carried off by the Galloping Hessian. As he was a bachelor, and in nobody's debt, nobody troubled his head any more about him; the school was removed to a different quarter of the Hollow, and another pedagogue reigned in his stead.

It is true, an old farmer, who had been down to New York on a visit several years after, and from whom this account of the ghostly adventure was received, brought home the intelligence that Ichabod Crane was still alive; that he had left the neighborhood partly through fear of the goblin and Hans Van Ripper, and partly in mortification at having been suddenly dismissed by the heiress; that he had changed his quarters to a

distant part of the country; had kept school and studied law at the same time; had been admitted to the bar; turned politician; electioneered; written for the newspapers; and finally had been made a justice of the ten pound court. Brom Bones, too, who, shortly after his rival's disappearance conducted the blooming Katrina in triumph to the altar, was observed to look exceedingly knowing whenever the story of Ichabod was related, and always burst into a hearty laugh at the mention of the pumpkin; which led some to suspect that he knew more about the matter than he chose to tell.

The old country wives, however, who are the best judges of these matters, maintain to this day that Ichabod was spirited away by supernatural means; and it is a favorite story often told about the neighborhood round the winter evening fire. The bridge became more than ever an object of superstitious awe; and that may be the reason why the road has been altered of late years, so as to approach the church by the border of the mill-pond. The schoolhouse being deserted soon fell to decay, and was reported to be haunted by the ghost of the unfortunate pedagogue; and the plow-boy, loitering homeward of a still summer evening, has often fancied his voice at a distance, chanting a melancholy psalm tune among the tranquil solitudes of Sleepy Hollow.—"*The Sketch-Book.*"

Fitz-Greene Halleck

A Fragment

. . . . . .

His shop is a grocer's—a snug, genteel place,
Near the corner of Oak Street and Pearl;
He can dress, dance, and bow to the ladies with grace,
And ties his cravat with a curl.

He's asked to all parties—north, south, east and west,
That take place between Chatham and Cherry,
And when he's been absent full oft has the "best
Society" ceased to be merry.

And nothing has darkened a sky so serene,
Nor disordered his beauship's Elysium,
Till this season among our *élite* there has been
What is called by the clergy "a schism."

'Tis all about eating and drinking—one set
Gives sponge-cake, a few "kisses" or so,
And is cooled after dancing with classic sherbet,
"Sublimed" [see Lord Byron] "with snow."

Another insists upon punch and *perdrix*,
Lobster salad, champagne, and, by way
Of a novelty only, those pearls of our sea,
Stewed oysters from Lynn-Haven Bay.

Fitz-Greene Halleck

Miss Flounce, the young milliner, blue-eyed and bright,
In the front parlor over her shop,
"Entertains," as the phrase is, a party to-night
Upon peanuts and ginger pop.

And Miss Fleece, who's a hosier and not quite as young,
But is wealthier far than Miss Flounce,
She "entertains" also, to-night, with cold tongue,
Smoked herring and cherry-bounce.

In praise of cold water the Theban bard spoke,
He of Teos sang sweetly of wine;
Miss Flounce is a Pindar in cashmere and cloak,
Miss Fleece an Anacreon divine.

The Montagues carry the day in Swamp Place,
In Pike Street the Capulets reign;
A *limonadière* is the badge of one race,
Of the other a flask of champagne.

Now as each the same evening her *soirée* announces,
What better, he asks, can be done,
Than drink water from eight until ten with the Flounces,
And then wine with the Fleeces till one!

. . . . . .

Domestic Happiness

"BESIDE the nuptial curtain bright,"
  The bard of Eden sings;
"Young Love his constant lamp will light,
  And wave his purple wings."
But raindrops from the clouds of care
  May bid that lamp be dim,
And the boy Love will pout and swear,
  'Tis then no place for him.

So mused the lovely Mrs. Dash;
  'Tis wrong to mention names;
When for her surly husband's cash
  She urged in vain her claims.
"I want a little money, dear,
  For Vandervoort and Flandin,
Their bill, which now has run a year,
  To-morrow mean to hand in."

"More?" cried the husband, half asleep,
  "You'll drive me to despair;"
The lady was too proud to weep,
  And too polite to swear.
She bit her lip for very spite,
  He felt a storm was brewing,
And dream'd of nothing else all night,
  But brokers, banks, and ruin.

Fitz-Greene Halleck

He thought her pretty once, but dreams
  Have sure a wondrous power,
For to his eye the lady seems
  Quite later'd since that hour;
And Love, who on their bridal eve
  Had promised long to stay,
Forgot his promise, took French leave,
  And bore his lamp away.

Augustus Baldwin Longstreet

The Horse-Swap

DURING the session of the Supreme Court in the village of ——, about three weeks ago, when a number of people were collected in the principal street of the village, I observed a young man riding up and down the street, as I supposed, in a violent passion. He galloped this way, then that, and then the other; spurred his horse to one group of citizens, then to another; then dashed off at half-speed, as if fleeing from danger; and, suddenly checking his horse, returned first in a pace, then in a trot, and then in a canter. While he was performing these various evolutions he cursed, swore, whooped, screamed, and tossed himself in every attitude which man could assume on horseback. In short, he *cavorted* most magnanimously (a term which, in our tongue, expresses all that I have described, and a little more), and seemed to be setting all creation at defiance. As I like to see all that is passing, I determined to take a position a little nearer to him, and to ascertain, if possible, what it was that affected him so sensibly. Accordingly I approached a crowd before which he had stopped for a moment, and examined it with the strictest scrutiny. But I could see nothing in it that seemed to have anything to do with the cavorter. Every man appeared to be in good humor, and all minding their own business. Not one so much as noticed the principal figure. Still he went on. After a semicolon pause, which my appearance seemed to produce (for he eyed me closely as I approached), he fetched a whoop, and swore that "he could out-swap any live man, woman, or child that ever

walked these hills, or that ever straddled horse-flesh since the days of old daddy Adam. Stranger," said he to me, "did you ever see the *Yallow* Blossom from Jasper?"

"No," said I, "but I have often heard of him."

"I'm the boy," continued he; "perhaps a *leetle*, jist a *leetle*, of the best man at a horse-swap that ever trod shoe-leather."

I began to feel my situation a little awkward, when I was relieved by a man somewhat advanced in years, who stepped up and began to survey the Yellow Blossom's horse with much apparent interest. This drew the rider's attention, and he turned the conversation from me to the stranger.

"Well, my old coon," said he, "do you want to swap *hosses?*"

"Why, I don't know," replied the stranger; "I believe I've got a beast I'd trade with you for that one, if you like him."

"Well, fetch up your nag, my old cock; you're jist the lark I wanted to get hold of. I am perhaps a *leetle*, jist a *leetle*, of the best man at a horse-swap that ever stole *cracklins* out of his mammy's fat gourd. Where's your *hoss?*"

"I'll bring him presently; but I want to examine your horse a little."

"Oh, look at him," said the Blossom, alighting and hitting him a cut—"look at him! He's the best piece of *hoss*-flesh in the thirteen united univarsal worlds. There's no sort o' mistake in little Bullet. He can pick up miles on his feet, and fling 'em behind him as fast as the next man's *hoss*, I don't care where he comes from. And he can keep at it as long as the sun can shine without resting."

During this harangue little Bullet looked as if he understood it all, believed it, and was ready at any moment to verify it. He was a horse of goodly countenance, rather expressive of vigilance than fire; though an unnatural appearance of fierceness was thrown into it by the loss of his ears, which had been

cropped pretty close to his head. Nature had done but little for Bullet's head and neck; but he managed, in a great measure, to hide their defects by bowing perpetually. He had obviously suffered severely for corn; but if his ribs and hip-bones had not disclosed the fact, *he* never would have done it; for he was in all respects as cheerful and happy as if he commanded all the corn-cribs and fodder-stacks in Georgia. His height was about twelve hands; but as his shape partook somewhat of that of the giraffe, his haunches stood much lower. They were short, strait, peaked, and concave. Bullet's tail, however, made amends for all his defects. All that the artist could do to beautify it had been done; and all that horse could do to compliment the artist, Bullet did. His tail was nicked in superior style, and exhibited the line of beauty in so many directions that it could not fail to hit the most fastidious taste in some of them. From the root it dropped into a graceful festoon, then rose in a handsome curve, then resumed its first direction, and then mounted suddenly upward like a cypress knee to a perpendicular of about two and a half inches. The whole had a careless and bewitching inclination to the right. Bullet obviously knew where his beauty lay, and took all occasions to display it to the best advantage. If a stick cracked, or if any one moved suddenly about him, or coughed, or hawked, or spoke a little louder than common, up went Bullet's tail like lightning; and if the *going up* did not please, the *coming down* must of necessity, for it was as different from the other movement as was its direction. The first was a bold and rapid flight upward, usually to an angle of forty-five degrees. In this position he kept his interesting appendage until he satisfied himself that nothing in particular was to be done; when he commenced dropping it by half inches, in second beats, then in triple time, then faster and shorter, and faster and

shorter still, until it finally died away imperceptibly into its natural position. If I might compare sights to sounds, I should say its *settling* was more like the note of a locust than anything else in nature.

Either from native sprightliness of disposition, from uncontrollable activity, or from an unconquerable habit of removing flies by the stamping of the feet, Bullet never stood still, but always kept up a gentle fly-scaring movement of his limbs, which was peculiarly interesting.

"I tell you, man," proceeded the Yellow Blossom, "he's the best live hoss that ever trod the grit of Georgia. Bob Smart knows the hoss. Come here, Bob, and mount this hoss, and show Bullet's motions." Here Bullet bristled up, and looked as if he had been hunting for Bob all day long, and had just found him. Bob sprang on his back. "Boo-oo-oo!" said Bob, with a fluttering noise of the lips, and away went Bullet as if in a quarter race, with all his beauties spread in handsome style.

"Now fetch him back," said Blossom. Bullet turned and came in pretty much as he went out.

"Now trot him by." Bullet reduced his tail to *customary*, sidled to the right and left airily, and exhibited at least three varieties of trot in the short space of fifty yards.

"Make him pace!" Bob commenced twitching the bridle and kicking at the same time. These inconsistent movements obviously (and most naturally) disconcerted Bullet; for it was impossible for him to learn from them whether he was to proceed or stand still. He started to trot, and was told that wouldn't do. He attempted a canter, and was checked again. He stopped, and was urged to go on. Bullet now rushed into the wide field of experiment, and struck out a gait of his own that completely turned the tables upon his rider, and certainly

deserved a patent. It seemed to have derived its elements from the jig, the minuet, and the cotillon. If it was not a pace, it certainly had *pace* in it, and no man would venture to call it anything else; so it passed off to the satisfaction of the owner.

"Walk him!" Bullet was now at home again, and he walked as if money were staked on him.

The stranger, whose name I afterward learned was Peter Ketch, having examined Bullet to his heart's content, ordered his son Neddy to go and bring up Kit. Neddy soon appeared upon Kit, a well-formed sorrel of the middle size, and in good order. His *tout-ensemble* threw Bullet entirely in the shade, though a glance was sufficient to satisfy any one that Bullet had the decided advantage of him in point of intellect.

"Why, man," said Blossom, "do you bring such a hoss as that to trade for Bullet? Oh, I see, you've no notion of trading!"

"Ride him off, Neddy!" said Peter. Kit put off at a handsome lope.

"Trot him back!" Kit came in at a long, sweeping trot, and stopped suddenly at the crowd.

"Well," said Blossom, "let me look at him; maybe he'll do to plow."

"Examine him," said Peter, taking hold of the bridle close to the mouth: "he's nothing but a tacky. He ain't as *pretty* a horse as Bullet, I know, but he'll do. Start 'em together for a hundred and fifty *mile*, and if Kit ain't twenty mile ahead of him at the coming out, any man may take Kit for nothing. But he's a monstrous mean horse, gentlemen; any man may see that. He's the scariest horse, too, you ever saw. He won't do to hunt on, nohow. Stranger, will you let Neddy have your rifle to shoot off him? Lay the rifle between his ears, Neddy, and shoot at the blaze in that stump. Tell me when his head is high enough."

Ned fired and hit the blaze, and Kit did not move a hair-breadth.

"Neddy, take a couple of sticks, and beat on that hogshead at Kit's tail."

Ned made a tremendous rattling, at which Bullet took fright, broke his bridle, and dashed off in grand style, and would have stopped all further negotiations by going home in disgust, had not a traveler arrested him and brought him back; but Kit did not move.

"I tell you, gentlemen," continued Peter, "he's the scariest horse you ever saw. He ain't as gentle as Bullet, but he won't do any harm if you watch him. Shall I put him in a cart, gig, or wagon for you, stranger? He'll cut the same capers there he does here. He's a monstrous mean horse."

During all this time Blossom was examining him with the nicest scrutiny. Having examined his frame and limbs, he now looked at his eyes.

"He's got a curious look out of his eyes," said Blossom.

"Oh, yes, sir," said Peter, "just as blind as a bat. Blind horses always have clear eyes. Make a motion at his eyes, if you please, sir."

Blossom did so, and Kit threw up his head rather as if something pricked him under the chin than as if fearing a blow. Blossom repeated the experiment, and Kit jerked back in considerable astonishment.

"Stone-blind, you see, gentlemen," proceeded Peter; "but he's just as good to travel of a dark night as if he had eyes."

"Blame my buttons," said Blossom, "if I like them eyes!"

"No," said Peter, "nor I neither. I'd rather have 'em made of diamonds; but they'll do—if they don't show as much white as Bullet's."

"Well," said Blossom, "make a pass at me."

"No," said Peter, "you made the banter, now make your pass."

"Well, I'm never afraid to price my hosses. You must give me twenty-five dollars boot."

"Oh, certainly; say fifty, and my saddle and bridle in. Here, Neddy, my son, take away daddy's horse."

"Well," said Blossom, "I've made my pass, now you make yours."

"I'm for short talk in a horse-swap, and therefore always tell a gentleman at once what I mean to do. You must give me ten dollars."

Blossom swore absolutely, roundly, and profanely that he never would give boot.

"Well," said Peter, "I didn't care about trading; but you cut such high shines that I thought I'd like to back you out, and I've done it. Gentlemen, you see I've brought him to a hack."

"Come, old man," said Blossom, "I've been joking with you. I begin to think you do want to trade; therefore, give me five dollars and take Bullet. I'd rather lose ten dollars any time than not make a trade, though I hate to fling away a good hoss."

"Well," said Peter, "I'll be as clever as you are. Just put the five dollars on Bullet's back, and hand him over; it's a trade."

Blossom swore again, as roundly as before, that he would not give boot; and, said he, "Bullet wouldn't hold five dollars on his back, nohow. But, as I bantered you, if you say an even swap, here's at you."

"I told you," said Peter, "I'd be as clever as you; therefore, here goes two dollars more, just for trade sake. Give me three dollars, and it's a bargain."

Blossom repeated his former assertion; and here the parties stood for a long time, and the bystanders (for many were now collected) began to taunt both parties. After some time, however, it was pretty unanimously decided that the old man had backed Blossom out.

At length Blossom swore he "never would be backed out for three dollars after bantering a man"; and, accordingly, they closed the trade.

"Now," said Blossom, as he handed Peter the three dollars, "I'm a man that, when he makes a bad trade, makes the most of it until he can make a better. I'm for no rues and after-claps."

"That's just my way," said Peter; "I never goes to law to mend my bargains."

"Ah, you're the kind of boy I love to trade with. Here's your hoss, old man. Take the saddle and bridle off him, and I'll strip yours; but lift up the blanket easy from Bullet's back, for he's a mighty tender-backed hoss."

The old man removed the saddle, but the blanket stuck fast. He attempted to raise it, and Bullet bowed himself, switched his tail, danced a little, and gave signs of biting.

"Don't hurt him, old man," said Blossom, archly; "take it off easy. I am, perhaps, a leetle of the best man at a horse-swap that ever catched a coon."

Peter continued to pull at the blanket more and more roughly, and Bullet became more and more *cavortish*, insomuch that, when the blanket came off, he had reached the *kicking* point in good earnest.

The removal of the blanket disclosed a sore on Bullet's backbone that seemed to have defied all medical skill. It measured six full inches in length and four in breadth, and had as many features as Bullet had motions. My heart

sickened at the sight; and I felt that the brute who had been riding him in that situation deserved the halter.

The prevailing feeling, however, was that of mirth. The laugh became loud and general at the old man's expense, and rustic witticisms were liberally bestowed upon him and his late purchase. These Blossom continued to provoke by various remarks. He asked the old man "if he thought Bullet would let five dollars lie on his back." He declared most seriously that he had owned that horse three months, and had never discovered before that he had a sore back, "or he never should have thought of trading him," etc., etc.

The old man bore it all with the most philosophic composure. He evinced no astonishment at his late discovery, and made no replies. But his son Neddy had not disciplined his feelings quite so well. His eyes opened wider and wider from the first to the last pull of the blanket, and when the whole sore burst upon his view, astonishment and fright seemed to contend for the mastery of his countenance. As the blanket disappeared, he stuck his hands in his breeches pockets, heaved a deep sigh, and lapsed into a profound reverie, from which he was only roused by the cuts at his father. He bore them as long as he could; and, when he could contain himself no longer, he began, with a certain wildness of expression which gave a peculiar interest to what he uttered: "His back's mighty bad off; but dod drot my soul if he's put it to daddy as bad as he thinks he has, for old Kit's both blind and *deef*, I'll be dod drot if he ein't!"

"The devil he is!" said Blossom.

"Yes, dod drot my soul if he *ein't!* You walk him, and see if he *ein't.* His eyes don't look like it; but he'd *jist as leve go agin* the house with you, or in a ditch, as anyhow. Now you go try him." The laugh was now turned on Blossom,

and many rushed to test the fidelity of the little boy's report. A few experiments established its truth beyond controversy.

"Neddy," said the old man, "you oughtn't to try and make people discontented with their things. Stranger, don't mind what the little boy says. If you can only get Kit rid of them little failings you'll find him all sorts of a horse. You are a *leetle* the best man at a horse-swap that ever I got hold of; but don't fool away Kit. Come, Neddy, my son, let's be moving; the stranger seems to be getting snappish."—*"Georgia Scenes."*

Georgia Theatrics

If my memory fail me not, the 10th of June, 1809, found me at about eleven o'clock in the forenoon, ascending a long and gentle slope in what was called "The Dark Corner" of Lincoln. I believe it took its name from the moral darkness which reigned over that portion of the county at the time of which I am speaking. If in this point of view it was but a shade darker than the rest of the county, it was inconceivably dark. If any man can name a trick or sin which had not been committed at the time of which I am speaking, in the very focus of all the county's illumination (Lincolnton), he must himself be the most inventive of the tricky and the very Judas of sinners. Since that time, however (all humor aside), Lincoln has become a living proof "that light shineth in darkness." Could I venture to mingle the solemn with the ludicrous, even for the purposes of honorable contrast, I could adduce from this county instances of the most numerous and wonderful transitions from vice and folly to virtue and holiness which have ever, perhaps, been witnessed since the days of the apostolic ministry. So much, lest

it should be thought by some that what I am about to relate is characteristic of the county in which it occurred.

Whatever may be said of the *moral* condition of the Dark Corner at the time just mentioned, its *natural* condition was anything but dark. It smiled in all the charms of spring; and spring borrowed a new charm from its undulating grounds, its luxuriant woodlands, its sportive streams, its vocal birds, and its blushing flowers.

Rapt with the enchantment of the season and the scenery around me, I was slowly rising the slope, when I was startled by loud, profane, and boisterous voices which seemed to proceed from a thick covert of undergrowth about two hundred yards in the advance of me, and about one hundred to the right of my road.

"You kin, kin you?"

"Yes, I kin, and am able to do it! Boo-oo-oo! Oh, wake snakes, and walk your chalks! Brimstone and —— fire! Don't hold me, Nick Stoval! The fight's made up, and let's go at it. —— my soul if I don't jump down his throat, and gallop every chitterling out of him before you can say 'quit'!"

"Now, Nick, don't hold him! Jist let the wildcat come, and I'll tame him. Ned'll see me a fair fight! Won't you, Ned?"

"Oh, yes; I'll see you a fair fight, blast my old shoes if I don't!"

"That's sufficient, as Tom Haynes said when he saw the elephant. Now let him come!"

Thus they went on, with countless oaths interspersed, which I dare not even hint at, and with much that I could not distinctly hear.

In mercy's name, thought I, what band of ruffians has selected this holy season and this heavenly retreat for such pandemoniac riots! I quickened my gait, and had come nearly oppo-

site to the thick grove whence the noise proceeded, when my eye caught, indistinctly and at intervals, through the foliage of the dwarf-oaks and hickories which intervened, glimpses of a man, or men, who seemed to be in a violent struggle; and I could occasionally catch those deep-drawn, emphatic oaths which men in conflict utter when they deal blows. I dismounted, and hurried to the spot with all speed. I had overcome about half the space which separated it from me, when I saw the combatants come to the ground, and, after a short struggle, I saw the uppermost one (for I could not see the other) make a heavy plunge with both his thumbs, and at the same instant I heard a cry in the accent of keenest torture, "Enough! My eye's out!"

I was so completely horror-struck that I stood transfixed for a moment to the spot where the cry met me. The accomplices in the hellish deed which had been perpetrated had all fled at my approach—at least, I supposed so, for they were not to be seen.

"Now, blast your corn-shucking soul!" said the victor (a youth about eighteen years old) as he rose from the ground—"come cutt'n' your shines 'bout me agin, next time I come to the court-house, will you? Get your owl eye in agin if you can!"

At this moment he saw me for the first time. He looked excessively embarrassed, and was moving off, when I called to him, in a tone emboldened by the sacredness of my office and the iniquity of his crime, "Come back, you brute, and assist me in relieving your fellow-mortal, whom you have ruined forever!"

My rudeness subdued his embarrassment in an instant; and, with a taunting curl of the nose, he replied, "You needn't kick before you're spurred. There a'n't nobody there, nor ha'n't been nother. I was jist seein' how I could 'a' *fout*." So say-

ing, he bounded to his plow, which stood in the corner of the fence about fifty yards beyond the battle-ground.

And, would you believe it, gentle reader? his report was true. All that I had heard and seen was nothing more nor less than a Lincoln rehearsal, in which the youth who had just left me had played all the parts of all the characters in a court-house fight.

I went to the ground from which he had risen, and there were the prints of his two thumbs, plunged up to the balls in the mellow earth, about the distance of a man's eyes apart; and the ground around was broken up as if two stags had been engaged upon it.—"*Georgia Scenes.*"

Seba Smith

My First Visit to Portland

In the fall of the year 1829 I took it into my head I'd go to Portland. I had heard a good deal about Portland, what a fine place it was, and how the folks got rich there proper fast; and that fall there was a couple of new papers come up to our place from there, called the *Portland Courier* and *Family Reader*, and they told a good many queer kind of things about Portland, and one thing and another; and all at once it popped into my head, and I up and told father, and says:

"I'm going to Portland, whether or no; and I'll see what this world is made of yet."

Father stared a little at first and said he was afraid I would get lost; but when he see I was bent upon it, he give it up, and he stepped to his chist, and opened the till, and took out a dollar and gave it to me; and says he:

"Jack, this is all I can do for you; but go and lead an honest life, and I believe I shall hear good of you yet."

He turned and walked across the room, but I could see the tears start into his eyes. And mother sat down and had a hearty crying-spell.

This made me feel rather bad for a minit or two, and I almost had a mind to give it up; and then again father's dream came into my mind, and I mustered up courage and declared I'd go. So I tackled up the old horse, and packed in a load of ax-handles and a few notions; and mother fried me some doughnuts and put 'em into a box, along with some cheese and sausages, and ropped me up another shirt, for I told her I

didn't know how long I should be gone. After I got rigged out, I went round and bid all the neighbors good-by and jumped in and drove off for Portland.

Aunt Sally had been married two or three years before and moved to Portland; and I inquired round till I found out where she lived, and went there and put the old horse up, and ate some supper and went to bed.

And the next morning I got up and straightened right off to see the editor of the *Portland Courier*, for I knew by what I had seen in his paper that he was just the man to tell me which way to steer. And when I come to see him, I knew I was right; for soon as I told him my name and what I wanted, he took me by the hand as kind as if he had been a brother, and says he:

"Mister," says he, "I'll do anything I can to assist you. You have come to a good town. Portland is a healthy, thriving place, and any man with a proper degree of enterprise may do well here. But," says he, "stranger"—and he looked mighty kind of knowing—says he, "if you want to make out to your mind, you must do as the steamboats do."

"Well," says I, "how do they do?" for I didn't know what a steamboat was any more than the man in the moon.

"Why," says he, "they go ahead. And you must drive about among the folks here just as tho' you were at home on the farm among the cattle. Don't be afraid of any of them, but figure away, and I dare say you'll get into good business in a very little while. But," says he, "there's one thing you must be careful of, and that is, not to get into the hands of those are folks that trades up round Hucklers' Row, for there's some sharpers up there, if they get hold of you, would twist your eye-teeth out in five minits."

Well, arter he had giv me all the good advice he could, I

went back to Aunt Sally's agin and got some breakfast; and then I walked all over the town, to see what chance I could find to sell my ax-handles and things and to git into business.

After I had walked about three or four hours, I come along toward the upper end of the town, where I found there were stores and shops of all sorts and sizes. And I met a feller, and says I:

"What place is this?"

"Why, this," says he, "is Hucklers' Row."

"What," says I, "are these the stores where the traders in Hucklers' Row keep?"

And says he, "Yes."

Well, then, says I to myself, I have a pesky good mind to go in and have a try with one of these chaps and see if they can twist my eye-teeth out. If they can get the best end of a bargain out of me they can do what there ain't a man in our place can do; and I should just like to know what sort of stuff these ere Portland chaps are made of. So in I goes into the best-looking store among 'em. And I see some biscuit lying on the shelf, and says I:

"Mister, how much do you ax apiece for them ere biscuits?"

"A cent apiece," says he.

"Well," says I, "I sha'n't give you that, but if you've a mind to, I'll give you two cents for three of them, for I begin to feel a little as tho' I would like to take a bite."

"Well," says he, "I wouldn't sell 'em to anybody else so, but seeing it's you, I don't care if you take 'em."

I knew he lied, for he never seen me before in his life. Well, he handed down the biscuits, and I took 'em, and walked round the store awhile, to see what else he had to sell. At last says I:

"Mister, have you got any good cider?"

Says he, "Yes, as good as ever you see."

"Well," says I, "what do you ax a glass for it?"

"Two cents," says he.

"Well," says I, "seems to me I feel more dry than I do hungry now. Ain't you a mind to take these ere biscuits again and give me a glass of cider?" and says he:

"I don't care if I do."

So he took and laid 'em on the shelf again and poured out a glass of cider. I took the glass of cider and drinkt it down, and, to tell you the truth about it, it was capital good cider. Then says I:

"I guess it's about time for me to be a-going," and so I stept along toward the door; but he ups and says, says he:

"Stop, mister, I believe you haven't paid me for the cider."

"Not paid you for the cider!" says I; "what do you mean by that? Didn't the biscuits that I give you just come to the cider?"

"Oh, ah, right!" says he.

So I started to go again, but before I had reached the door he says, says he:

"But stop, mister, you didn't pay me for the biscuit."

"What!" says I, "do you mean to impose upon me? Do you think I am going to pay you for the biscuits, and let you keep them, too? Ain't they there now on your shelf? What more do you want? I guess, sir, you don't whittle me in that way."

So I turned about and marched off and left the feller staring and scratching his head as tho' he was struck with a dunderment.

Howsomever, I didn't want to cheat him, only jest to show 'em it wa'n't so easy a matter to pull my eye-teeth out; so I called in next day and paid him two cents.

William Cullen Bryant

The Mosquito

FAIR insect! that with threadlike legs spread out,
And blood-extracting bill and filmy wing,
Dost murmur, as thou slowly sail'st about,
In pitiless ears, full many a plaintive thing,
And tell how little our large veins should bleed,
Would we but yield them to thy bitter need?

Unwillingly, I own, and, what is worse,
Full angrily men hearken to thy plaint;
Thou gettest many a brush and many a curse,
For saying thou art gaunt and starved and faint.
Even the old beggar, while he asks for food,
Would kill thee, hapless stranger, if he could.

I call thee stranger, for the town, I ween,
Has not the honor of so proud a birth—
Thou com'st from Jersey meadows, fresh and green,
The offspring of the gods, though born on earth;
For Titan was thy sire, and fair was she,
The ocean nymph that nursed thy infancy.

Beneath the rushes was thy cradle swung,
And when at length thy gauzy wings grew strong,
Abroad to gentle airs their folds were flung,
Rose in the sky, and bore thee soft along;
The south wind breathed to waft thee on thy way,
And danced and shone beneath the billowy bay.

Calm rose afar the city spires, and thence
  Came the deep murmur of its throng of men,
And as its grateful odors met thy sense,
  They seemed the perfumes of thy native fen.
Fair lay its crowded streets, and at the sight
Thy tiny song grew shriller with delight.

At length thy pinion fluttered in Broadway—
  Ah, there were fairy steps, and white necks kissed
By wanton airs, and eyes whose killing ray
  Shone through the snowy veils like stars through mist;
And fresh as morn, on many a cheek and chin,
Bloomed the bright blood through the transparent skin.

Sure these were sights to tempt an anchorite!
  What! do I hear thy slender voice complain?
Thou wailest when I talk of beauty's light,
  As if it brought the memory of pain.
Thou art a wayward being—well—come near,
And pour thy tale of sorrow in mine ear.

What say'st thou, slanderer! rouge makes thee sick?
  And China Bloom at best is sorry food?
And Rowland's Kalydor, if laid on thick,
  Poisons the thirsty wretch that bores for blood.
Go! 'Twas a just reward that met thy crime—
But shun the sacrilege another time.

That bloom was made to look at—not to touch;
  To worship—not approach—that radiant white;
And well might sudden vengeance light on such
  As dared, like thee, most impiously to bite.

William Cullen Bryant

Thou shouldst have gazed at distance and admired—
Murmur'd thy admiration and retired.

Thou'rt welcome to the town—but why come here
  To bleed a brother poet, gaunt like thee?
Alas! the little blood I have is dear,
  And thin will be the banquet drawn from me.
Look round—the pale-eyed sisters in my cell,
Thy old acquaintance, Song and Famine, dwell.

Try some plump alderman, and suck the blood
  Enrich'd by gen'rous wine and costly meat;
On well-filled skins, sleek as thy native mud,
  Fix thy light pump, and press thy freckled feet.
Go to the men for whom, in ocean's halls,
The oyster breeds and the green turtle sprawls.

There corks are drawn, and the red vintage flows,
  To fill the swelling veins for thee, and now
The ruddy cheek, and now the ruddier nose
  Shall tempt thee, as thou flittest round the brow;
And when the hour of sleep its quiet brings,
No angry hand shall rise to brush thy wings.

Robert C. Sands

A Monody

Made on the Late Mr. Samuel Patch, by an Admirer of the Bathos

"By water shall he die and take his end."—SHAKESPEARE.

TOLL for Sam Patch! Sam Patch, who jumps no more,
This or the world to come. Sam Patch is dead!
The vulgar pathway to the unknown shore
Of dark futurity, he would not tread.
No friends stood sorrowing round his dying bed;
Nor with decorous woe, sedately stepp'd
Behind his corpse, and tears by retail shed—
The mighty river, as it onward swept,
In one great wholesale sob, his body drowned and kept.

Toll for Sam Patch! he scorned the common way
That leads to fame, up heights of rough ascent,
And having heard Pope and Longinus say
That some great men had risen by falls, he went
And jumped, where wild Passaic's waves had rent
The antique rocks—the air free passage gave—
And graciously the liquid element
Upbore him, like some sea-god on its wave;
And all the people said that Sam was very brave.

Fame, the clear spirit that doth to heaven upraise,
Let Sam to dive into what Byron calls

The hell of waters. For the sake of praise,
  He wooed the bathos down great waterfalls;
  The dizzy precipice, which the eye appals
Of travelers for pleasure, Samuel found
  Pleasant, as are to women lighted halls,
Crammed full of fools and fiddles; to the sound
Of the eternal roar, he timed his desperate bound.

Sam was a fool. But the large world of such,
  Has thousands—better taught, alike absurd,
And less sublime. Of fame he soon got much,
  Where distant cataracts spout, of him men heard
  Alas for Sam! Had he aright preferred
The kindly element, to which he gave himself so fearlessly,
  We had not heard
That it was now his winding-sheet and grave,
Nor sung, 'twixt tears and smiles, our requiem for the brave.

He soon got drunk with rum and with renown,
  As many others in high places do—
Whose fall is like Sam's last—for down and down,
  By one mad impulse driven, they flounder through
  The gulf that keeps the future from our view,
And then are found not. May they rest in peace!
  We heave the sigh to human frailty due—
And shall not Sam have his? The muse shall cease
To keep the heroic roll, which she began in Greece—

With demigods who went to the Black Sea
  For wool (and if the best accounts be straight,
Came back, in Negro phraseology,
  With the same wool each upon his pate),

In which she chronicled the deathless fate
Of him who jumped into the perilous ditch
Left by Rome's street commissioners, in a state
Which made it dangerous, and by jumping which
He made himself renowned and the contractors rich—

I say, the muse shall quite forget to sound
The chord whose music is undying, if
She do not strike it when Sam Patch is drowned.
Leander dived for love. Leucadia's cliff
The Lesbian Sappho leapt from in a miff,
To punish Phaon; Icarus went dead
Because the wax did not continue stiff;
And, had he minded what his father said,
He had not given a name unto his watery bed.

And Helle's case was all an accident,
As everybody knows. Why sing of these?
Nor would I rank with Sam that man who went
Down into Ætna's womb—Empedocles,
I think he called himself. Themselves to please,
Or else unwillingly, they made their springs;
For glory in the abstract, Sam made his,
To prove to all men, commons, lords, and kings,
That "some things may be done, as well as other things."

I will not be fatigued, by citing more
Who jump'd of old, by hazard or design,
Nor plague the weary ghosts of boyish lore,
Vulcan, Apollo, Phaethon—in fine
All Tooke's Pantheon. Yet they grew divine
By their long tumbles; and if we can match
Their hierarchy, shall we not entwine

One wreath? Who ever came "up to the scratch,"
And for so little, jumped so bravely as Sam Patch?

To long conclusions many men have jumped
  In logic, and the safer course they took;
By any other they would have been stumped,
  Unable to argue, or to quote a book,
  And quite dumfounded, which they cannot brook;
They break no bones, and suffer no contusion,
  Hiding their woful fall, by hook and crook,
In slang and gibberish, sputtering and confusion;
But that was not the way Sam came to *his* conclusion.

He jumped in person. Death or victory
  Was his device, "and there was no mistake,"
Except his last; and then he did but die,
  A blunder which the wisest men will make.
  Aloft, where mighty floods the mountains break,
To stand, the target of ten thousand eyes,
  And down into the coil and water-quake,
To leap, like Maia's offspring, from the skies—
For this all vulgar flights he ventured to despise.

And while Niagara prolongs its thunder,
  Though still the rock primeval disappears,
And nations change their bounds—the theme of wonder
  Shall Sam go down the cataract of long years:
  And if there be sublimity in tears,
Those shall be precious which the adventurer shed
  When his frail star gave way, and waked his fears,
Lest, by the ungenerous crowd it might be said,
That he was all a hoax, or that his pluck had fled.

Who would compare the maudlin Alexander,
  Blubbering because he had no job in hand,
Acting the hypocrite, or else the gander,
  With Sam, whose grief we all can understand?
  His crying was not womanish, nor plann'd
For exhibition; but his heart o'erswelled
  With its own agony, when he the grand
Natural arrangements for a jump beheld,
And measuring the cascade, found not his courage quelled.

His last great failure set the final seal
  Unto the record Time shall never tear,
While bravery has its honor—while men feel
  The holy natural sympathies which are
  First, last and mightiest in the bosom. Where
The tortured tides of Genesee descend,
  He came—his only intimate a bear—
(We know not that he had another friend),
The martyr of renown, his wayward course to end.

The fiend that from the infernal rivers stole
  Hell-drafts for man, too much tormented him,
With nerves unstrung, but steadfast in his soul,
  He stood upon the salient current's brim;
  His head was giddy, and his sight was dim;
And then he knew this leap would be his last—
  Saw air, and earth, and water, wildly swim,
With eyes of many multitudes, dense and vast,
That stared in mockery; none a look of kindness cast.

Beat down, in the huge amphitheater,
  "I see before me the gladiator lie,"

And tier on tier, the myriads waiting there
  The law of grace, without one pitying eye—
  He was a slave—a captive hired to die—
Sam was born free as Caesar; and he might
  The hopeless issue have refused to try:
Not with true leap, but scum with faltering flight—
"Deep in the roaring gulf, he plunged to endless night."

But, ere he leapt, he begged of those who made
  Money by his dread venture, that if he
Should perish, such collection should be paid
  As might be picked up from the "company"
  To his Mother. This, his last request, shall be—
Tho' she who bore him ne'er his fate should know—
  An iris, glittering o'er his memory—
When all the streams have worn their barriers low,
And, by the sea drunk up, forever cease to flow.

On him who chooses to jump down cataracts,
  Why should the sternest moralist be severe?
Judge not the dead by prejudice—but facts,
  Such as in strictest evidence appear.
  Else were the laurels of all ages sere.
Give to the brave, who have passed the final goal—
  The gates that ope not back—the generous tear;
And let the muse's clerk upon her scroll,
In coarse, but honest verse, make up the judgment roll.

Therefore it is considered that Sam Patch
  Shall never be forgot in prose or rhyme;
His name shall be a portion in the batch
  Of the heroic dough, which baking Time

Kneads for consuming ages—and the chime
Of Fame's old bells, long as they truly ring,
Shall tell of him: he dived for the sublime,
And found it. Thou, who, with the eagle's wing,
Being a goose, would'st fly—dream not of such a thing!

Albert Gorton Greene

Old Grimes

Old Grimes is dead; that good old man
  We never shall see more:
He used to wear a long, black coat,
  All button'd down before.

His heart was open as the day,
  His feelings all were true:
His hair was some inclined to gray—
  He wore it in a queue.

Whene'er he heard the voice of pain,
  His breast with pity burn'd:
The large, round head upon his cane
  From ivory was turn'd.

Kind words he ever had for all;
  He knew no base design:
His eyes were dark and rather small,
  His nose was aquiline.

He lived at peace with all mankind,
  In friendship he was true:
His coat had pocket-holes behind,
  His pantaloons were blue.

Unharm'd, the sin which earth pollutes
  He pass'd securely o'er,

And never wore a pair of boots
  For thirty years or more.

But good old Grimes is now at rest,
  Nor fears misfortune's frown:
He wore a double-breasted vest—
  The stripes ran up and down.

He modest merit sought to find,
  And pay it its desert:
He had no malice in his mind,
  No ruffles on his shirt.

His neighbors he did not abuse—
  Was sociable and gay:
He wore large buckles on his shoes,
  And changed them every day.

His knowledge, hid from public gaze,
  He did not bring to view,
Nor made a noise, town-meeting days,
  As many people do.

His worldly goods he never threw
  In trust to fortune's chances,
But lived (as all his brothers do)
  In easy circumstances.

Thus undisturb'd by anxious cares,
  His peaceful moments ran;
And everybody said he was
  A fine old gentleman.

Nathaniel Hawthorne

The British Matron

I HAVE heard a good deal of the tenacity with which English ladies retain their personal beauty to a late period of life; but (not to suggest that an American eye needs use and cultivation before it can quite appreciate the charm of English beauty at any age) it strikes me that an English lady of fifty is apt to become a creature less refined and delicate, so far as her physique goes, than anything that we Western people class under the name of woman. She has an awful ponderosity of frame —not pulpy, like the looser development of our few fat women, but massive, with solid beef and streaky tallow; so that (though struggling manfully against the idea) you inevitably think of her as made up of steaks and sirloins. When she walks her advance is elephantine. When she sits down it is on a great round space of her Maker's footstool, where she looks as if nothing could ever move her. She imposes awe and respect by the muchness of her personality, to such a degree that you probably credit her with far greater moral and intellectual force than she can fairly claim. Her visage is usually grim and stern, seldom positively forbidding, yet calmly terrible, not merely by its breadth and weight of feature, but because it seems to express so much well-defined self-reliance, such acquaintance with the world, its toils, troubles, and dangers, and such sturdy capacity for trampling down a foe. Without anything positively salient, or actively offensive, or, indeed, unjustly formidable to her neighbors, she has the effect of a seventy-four-gun ship in time of peace; for, while

you assure yourself that there is no real danger, you cannot help thinking how tremendous would be her onset if pugnaciously inclined, and how futile the effort to inflict any counter-injury. She certainly looks tenfold—nay, a hundredfold—better able to take care of herself than our slender-framed and haggard womankind; but I have not found reason to suppose that the English dowager of fifty has actually greater courage, fortitude, and strength of character than our women of similar age, or even a tougher physical endurance than they. Morally, she is strong, I suspect, only in society and in the common routine of social affairs, and would be found powerless and timid in any exceptional strait that might call for energy outside of the conventionalities amid which she has grown up.

You can meet this figure in the street, and live, and even smile at the recollection. But conceive of her in a ballroom, with the bare, brawny arms that she invariably displays there, and all the other corresponding development, such as is beautiful in the maiden blossom, but a spectacle to howl at in such an overblown cabbage-rose as this.

Yet, somewhere in this enormous bulk there must be hidden the modest, slender violet-nature of a girl, whom an alien mass of earthliness has unkindly overgrown; for an English maiden in her teens, though very seldom so pretty as our own damsels, possesses, to say the truth, a certain charm of half-blossom, and delicately folded leaves, and tender womanhood, shielded by maidenly reserves, with which, somehow or other, our American girls often fail to adorn themselves during an appreciable moment. It is a pity that the English violet should grow into such an outrageously developed peony as I have attempted to describe. I wonder whether a middle-aged husband ought to be considered as legally married to all the accretions that have overgrown the slenderness of his bride,

since he led her to the altar, and which make her so much more than he ever bargained for! Is it not a sounder view of the case that the matrimonial bond cannot be held to include the three-fourths of the wife that had no existence when the ceremony was performed? And ought not an English married pair to insist upon the celebration of a silver wedding at the end of twenty-five years to legalize that corporeal growth of which both parties have individually come into possession since pronounced one flesh?

—"LEAMINGTON SPA," in *Our Old Home.*

Dr. Heidegger's Experiment

THAT very singular man, old Dr. Heidegger, once invited four venerable friends to meet him in his study. There were three white-bearded gentlemen—Mr. Medbourne, Colonel Killigrew, and Mr. Gascoigne—and a withered gentlewoman whose name was the Widow Wycherly. They were all melancholy old creatures who had been unfortunate in life, and whose greatest misfortune it was that they were not long ago in their graves. Mr. Medbourne, in the vigor of his age, had been a prosperous merchant, but had lost his all by a frantic speculation, and was now little better than a mendicant. Colonel Killigrew had wasted his best years and his health and substance in the pursuit of sinful pleasures which had given birth to a brood of pains, such as the gout and divers other torments of soul and body. Mr. Gascoigne was a ruined politician, a man of evil fame—or, at least, had been so till time had buried him from the knowledge of the present generation and made him obscure instead of infamous. As for the Widow Wycherly,

tradition tells us that she was a great beauty in her day, but for a long while past she had lived in deep seclusion on account of certain scandalous stories which had prejudiced the gentry of the town against her. It is a circumstance worth mentioning that each of these three old gentlemen—Mr. Medbourne, Colonel Killigrew, and Mr. Gascoigne—were early lovers of the Widow Wycherly, and had once been on the point of cutting each other's throats for her sake. And before proceeding farther I will merely hint that Dr. Heidegger and all his four guests were sometimes thought to be a little beside themselves, as is not infrequently the case with old people when worried either by present troubles or woful recollections.

"My dear old friends," said Dr. Heidegger, motioning them to be seated, "I am desirous of your assistance in one of those little experiments with which I amuse myself here in my study."

If all stories were true, Dr. Heidegger's study must have been a very curious place. It was a dim, old-fashioned chamber festooned with cobwebs and besprinkled with antique dust. Around the walls stood several oaken bookcases, the lower shelves of which were filled with rows of gigantic folios and black-letter quartos, and the upper with little parchment-covered duodecimos. Over the central bookcase was a bronze bust of Hippocrates, with which, according to some authorities, Dr. Heidegger was accustomed to hold consultations in all difficult cases of his practise. In the obscurest corner of the room stood a tall and narrow oaken closet with its door ajar, within which doubtfully appeared a skeleton. Between two of the bookcases hung a looking-glass, presenting its high and dusty plate within a tarnished gilt frame. Among many wonderful stories related of this mirror, it was fabled that the spirits of all the doctor's deceased patients dwelt within its verge and would stare him in the face whenever he

looked thitherward. The opposite side of the chamber was ornamented with the full-length portrait of a young lady arrayed in the faded magnificence of silk, satin, and brocade, and with a visage as faded as her dress. Above half a century ago Dr. Heidegger had been on the point of marriage with this young lady, but, being affected with some slight disorder, she had swallowed one of her lover's prescriptions and died on the bridal-evening. The greatest curiosity of the study remains to be mentioned: it was a ponderous folio volume bound in black leather, with massive silver clasps. There were no letters on the back, and nobody could tell the title of the book. But it was well known to be a book of magic, and once, when a chambermaid had lifted it merely to brush away the dust, the skeleton had rattled in its closet, the picture of the young lady had stepped one foot upon the floor, and several ghastly faces had peeped forth from the mirror, while the brazen head of Hippocrates frowned and said, "Forbear!"

Such was Dr. Heidegger's study. On the summer afternoon of our tale a small round table as black as ebony stood in the center of the room, sustaining a cut-glass vase of beautiful form and elaborate workmanship. The sunshine came through the window between the heavy festoons of two faded damask curtains and fell directly across this vase; so that a mild splendor was reflected from it on the ashen visages of the five old people who sat around. Four champagne-glasses were also on the table.

"My dear old friends," repeated Dr. Heidegger, "may I reckon on your aid in performing an exceedingly curious experiment?"

Now, Dr. Heidegger was a very strange old gentleman whose eccentricity had become the nucleus for a thousand fantastic stories. Some of these fables—to my shame be it spoken—

might possibly be traced back to mine own veracious self; and if any passages of the present tale should startle the reader's faith, I must be content to bear the stigma of a fiction-monger.

When the doctor's four guests heard him talk of his proposed experiment, they anticipated nothing more wonderful than the murder of a mouse in an air-pump, or the examination of a cobweb by the microscope, or some similar nonsense with which he was constantly in the habit of pestering his intimates. But without waiting for a reply Dr. Heidegger hobbled across the chamber and returned with the same ponderous folio bound in black leather which common report affirmed to be a book of magic. Undoing the silver clasps, he opened the volume and took from among its black-letter pages a rose, or what was once a rose, though now the green leaves and crimson petals had assumed one brownish hue, and the ancient flower seemed ready to crumble to dust in the doctor's hands.

"This rose," said Dr. Heidegger, with a sigh—"this same withered and crumbling flower—blossomed five and fifty years ago. It was given me by Sylvia Ward, whose portrait hangs yonder, and I meant to wear it in my bosom at our wedding. Five and fifty years it has been treasured between the leaves of this old volume. Now, would you deem it possible that this rose of half a century could ever bloom again?"

"Nonsense!" said the Widow Wycherly, with a peevish toss of her head. "You might as well ask whether an old woman's wrinkled face could ever bloom again."

"See!" answered Dr. Heidegger. He uncovered the vase and threw the faded rose into the water which it contained. At first it lay lightly on the surface of the fluid, appearing to imbibe none of its moisture. Soon, however, a singular change

began to be visible. The crushed and dried petals stirred and assumed a deepening tinge of crimson, as if the flower were reviving from a deathlike slumber, the slender stalk and twigs of foliage became green, and there was the rose of half a century, looking as fresh as when Sylvia Ward had first given it to her lover. It was scarcely full-blown, for some of its delicate red leaves curled modestly around its moist bosom, within which two or three dewdrops were sparkling.

"That is certainly a very pretty deception," said the doctor's friends—carelessly, however, for they had witnessed greater miracles at a conjurer's show. "Pray, how was it effected?"

"Did you never hear of the fountain of youth?" asked Dr. Heidegger, "which Ponce de Leon, the Spanish adventurer, went in search of two or three centuries ago?"

"But did Ponce de Leon ever find it?" said the Widow Wycherly.

"No," answered Dr. Heidegger, "for he never sought it in the right place. The famous fountain of youth, if I am rightly informed, is situated in the southern part of the Floridian peninsula, not far from Lake Macaco. Its source is overshadowed by several gigantic magnolias which, though numberless centuries old, have been kept as fresh as violets by the virtues of this wonderful water. An acquaintance of mine, knowing my curiosity in such matters, has sent me what you see in the vase."

"Ahem!" said Colonel Killigrew, who believed not a word of the doctor's story; "and what may be the effect of this fluid on the human frame?"

"You shall judge for yourself, my dear colonel," replied Dr. Heidegger. "And all of you, my respected friends, are welcome to so much of this admirable fluid as may restore to you the bloom of youth. For my own part, having had much

trouble in growing old, I am in no hurry to grow young again. With your permission, therefore, I will merely watch the progress of the experiment."

While he spoke Dr. Heidegger had been filling the four champagne-glasses with the water of the fountain of youth. It was apparently impregnated with an effervescent gas, for little bubbles were continually ascending from the depths of the glasses and bursting in silvery spray at the surface. As the liquor diffused a pleasant perfume, the old people doubted not that it possessed cordial and comfortable properties, and, though utter skeptics as to its rejuvenescent power, they were inclined to swallow it at once. But Dr. Heidegger besought them to stay a moment.

"Before you drink, my respectable old friends," said he, "it would be well that, with the experience of a lifetime to direct you, you should draw up a few general rules for your guidance in passing a second time through the perils of youth. Think what a sin and shame it would be if, with your peculiar advantages, you should not become patterns of virtue and wisdom to all the young people of the age!"

The doctor's four venerable friends made him no answer except by a feeble and tremulous laugh, so very ridiculous was the idea that, knowing how closely repentance treads behind the steps of error, they should ever go astray again.

"Drink, then," said the doctor, bowing; "I rejoice that I have so well selected the subjects of my experiment."

With palsied hands they raised the glasses to their lips. The liquor, if it really possessed such virtues as Dr. Heidegger imputed to it, could not have been bestowed on four human beings who needed it more wofully. They looked as if they had never known what youth or pleasure was, but had been the offspring of Nature's dotage, and always the gray, decrepit,

sapless, miserable creatures who now sat stooping round the doctor's table without life enough in their souls or bodies to be animated even by the prospect of growing young again. They drank off the water and replaced their glasses on the table.

Assuredly, there was an almost immediate improvement in the aspect of the party—not unlike what might have been produced by a glass of generous wine—together with a sudden glow of cheerful sunshine, brightening over all their visages at once. There was a healthful suffusion on their cheeks instead of the ashen hue that had made them look so corpse-like. They gazed at one another, and fancied that some magic power had really begun to smooth away the deep and sad inscriptions which Father Time had been so long engraving on their brows. The Widow Wycherly adjusted her cap, for she felt almost like a woman again.

"Give us more of this wondrous water," cried they, eagerly. "We are younger, but we are still too old. Quick! give us more!"

"Patience, patience!" quoth Dr. Heidegger, who sat watching the experiment with philosophic coolness. "You have been a long time growing old; surely you might be content to grow young in half an hour. But the water is at your service." Again he filled their glasses with the liquor of youth, enough of which still remained in the vase to turn half the old people in the city to the age of their own grandchildren.

While the bubbles were yet sparkling on the brim the doctor's four guests snatched their glasses from the table and swallowed the contents at a single gulp. Was it delusion? Even while the draught was passing down their throats it seemed to have wrought a change on their whole systems. Their eyes grew clear and bright; a dark shade deepened among their silvery

locks: they sat around the table three gentlemen of middle age and a woman hardly beyond her buxom prime.

"My dear widow, you are charming!" cried Colonel Killigrew, whose eyes had been fixed upon her face while the shadows of age were flitting from it like darkness from the crimson daybreak.

The fair widow knew of old that Colonel Killigrew's compliments were not always measured by sober truth; so she started up and ran to the mirror, still dreading that the ugly visage of an old woman would meet her gaze.

Meanwhile the three gentlemen behaved in such a manner as proved that the water of the fountain of youth possessed some intoxicating qualities—unless, indeed, their exhilaration of spirits were merely a lightsome dizziness caused by the sudden removal of the weight of years. Mr. Gascoigne's mind seemed to run on political topics, but whether relating to the past, present, or future could not easily be determined, since the same ideas and phrases have been in vogue these fifty years. Now he rattled forth full-throated sentences about patriotism, national glory, and the people's right; now he muttered some perilous stuff or other in a sly and doubtful whisper, so cautiously that even his own conscience could scarcely catch the secret; and now, again, he spoke in measured accents and a deeply deferential tone as if a royal ear were listening to his well-turned periods. Colonel Killigrew all this time had been trolling forth a jolly bottle-song and ringing his glass in symphony with the chorus, while his eyes wandered toward the buxom figure of the Widow Wycherly. On the other side of the table, Mr. Medbourne was involved in a calculation of dollars and cents with which was strangely intermingled a project for supplying the East Indies with ice by harnessing a team of whales to the polar icebergs. As for

the Widow Wycherly, she stood before the mirror courtesying and simpering to her own image and greeting it as the friend whom she loved better than all the world besides. She thrust her face close to the glass to see whether some long-remembered wrinkle or crow's-foot had indeed vanished; she examined whether the snow had so entirely melted from her hair that the venerable cap could be safely thrown aside. At last, turning briskly away, she came with a sort of dancing step to the table.

"My dear old doctor," cried she, "pray favor me with another glass."

"Certainly, my dear madam, certainly," replied the complaisant doctor. "See! I have already filled the glasses."

There, in fact, stood the four glasses brimful of this wonderful water, the delicate spray of which, as it effervesced from the surface, resembled the tremulous glitter of diamonds.

It was now so nearly sunset that the chamber had grown duskier than ever, but a mild and moonlike splendor gleamed from within the vase and rested alike on the four guests and on the doctor's venerable figure. He sat in a high-backed, elaborately carved oaken armchair with a gray dignity of aspect that might have well befitted that very Father Time whose power had never been disputed save by this fortunate company. Even while quaffing the third draught of the fountain of youth, they were almost awed by the expression of his mysterious visage. But the next moment the exhilarating gush of young life shot through their veins. They were now in the happy prime of youth. Age, with its miserable train of cares and sorrows and diseases, was remembered only as the trouble of a dream from which they had joyously awoke. The fresh gloss of the soul, so early lost and without which the world's successive scenes had been but a gallery of faded pictures,

again threw its enchantment over all their prospects. They felt like new-created beings in a new-created universe.

"We are young! We are young!" they cried, exultingly.

Youth, like the extremity of age, had effaced the strongly marked characteristics of middle life and mutually assimilated them all. They were a group of merry youngsters almost maddened with the exuberant frolicsomeness of their years. The most singular effect of their gaiety was an impulse to mock the infirmity and decrepitude of which they had so lately been the victims. They laughed loudly at their old-fashioned attire—the wide-skirted coats and flapped waistcoats of the young men and the ancient cap and gown of the blooming girl. One limped across the floor like a gouty grandfather; one set a pair of spectacles astride of his nose and pretended to pore over the black-letter pages of the book of magic; a third seated himself in an armchair and strove to imitate the venerable dignity of Dr. Heidegger. Then all shouted mirthfully and leaped about the room.

The Widow Wycherly—if so fresh a damsel could be called a widow—tripped up to the doctor's chair with a mischievous merriment in her rosy face.

"Doctor, you dear old soul," cried she, "get up and dance with me;" and then the four young people laughed louder than ever to think what a queer figure the poor old doctor would cut.

"Pray excuse me," answered the doctor, quietly. "I am old and rheumatic, and my dancing-days were over long ago. But either of these gay young gentlemen will be glad of so pretty a partner."

"Dance with me, Clara," cried Colonel Killigrew.

"No, no! I will be her partner," shouted Mr. Gascoigne.

"She promised me her hand fifty years ago!" exclaimed Mr. Medbourne.

They all gathered round her. One caught both her hands in his passionate grasp, another threw his arm about her waist, the third buried his hand among the glossy curls that clustered beneath the widow's cap. Blushing, panting, struggling, chiding, laughing, her warm breath fanning each of their faces by turns, she strove to disengage herself, yet still remained in their triple embrace. Never was there a livelier picture of youthful rivalship, with bewitching beauty for the prize. Yet, by a strange deception, owing to the duskiness of the chamber and the antique dresses which they still wore, the tall mirror is said to have reflected the figures of the three old, gray, withered grandsires ridiculously contending for the skinny ugliness of a shriveled grandam. But they were young: their burning passions proved them so.

Inflamed to madness by the coquetry of the girl-widow, who neither granted nor quite withheld her favors, the three rivals began to interchange threatening glances. Still keeping hold of the fair prize, they grappled fiercely at one another's throats. As they struggled to and fro the table was overturned and the vase dashed into a thousand fragments. The precious water of youth flowed in a bright stream across the floor, moistening the wings of a butterfly which, grown old in the decline of summer, had alighted there to die. The insect fluttered lightly through the chamber and settled on the snowy head of Dr. Heidegger.

"Come, come, gentlemen! Come, Madam Wycherly!" exclaimed the doctor. "I really must protest against this riot."

They stood still and shivered, for it seemed as if gray Time were calling them back from their sunny youth far down into the chill and darksome vale of years. They looked at old Dr. Heidegger, who sat in his carved armchair holding the rose of half a century, which he had rescued from among the

fragments of the shattered vase. At the motion of his hand the four rioters resumed their seats—the more readily because their violent exertions had wearied them, youthful though they were.

"My poor Sylvia's rose!" ejaculated Dr. Heidegger, holding it in the light of the sunset clouds. "It appears to be fading again."

And so it was. Even while the party were looking at it the flower continued to shrivel up, till it became as dry and fragile as when the doctor had first thrown it into the vase. He shook off the few drops of moisture which clung to its petals.

"I love it as well thus as in its dewy freshness," observed he, pressing the withered rose to his withered lips.

While he spoke the butterfly fluttered down from the doctor's snowy head and fell upon the floor. His guests shivered again. A strange chillness—whether of the body or spirit, they could not tell—was creeping gradually over them all. They gazed at one another, and fancied that each fleeting moment snatched away a charm and left a deepening furrow where none had been before. Was it an illusion? Had the changes of a lifetime been crowded into so brief a space, and were they now four aged people sitting with their old friend Dr. Heidegger?

"Are we grown old again so soon?" cried they, dolefully.

In truth, they had. The water of youth possessed merely a virtue more transient than that of wine; the delirium which it created had effervesced away. Yes, they were old again. With a shuddering impulse that showed her a woman still, the widow clasped her skinny hands before her face and wished that the coffin-lid were over it, since it could be no longer beautiful.

"Yes, friends, ye are old again," said Dr. Heidegger, "and,

lo! the water of youth is all lavished on the ground. Well, I bemoan it not; for if the fountain gushed at my very door-step, I would not stoop to bathe my lips in it—no, though its delirium were for years instead of moments. Such is the lesson ye have taught me."

But the doctor's four friends had taught no such lesson to themselves. They resolved forthwith to make a pilgrimage to Florida and quaff at morning, noon and night from the fountain of youth.—"*Twice-Told Tales.*"

Mr. Higginbotham's Catastrophe

A YOUNG fellow, a tobacco-pedler by trade, was on his way from Morristown, where he had dealt largely with the deacon of the Shaker settlement, to the village of Parker's Falls, on Salmon River. He had a neat little cart painted green, with a box of cigars depicted on each side-panel, and an Indian chief holding a pipe and a golden tobacco-stalk on the rear. The pedler drove a smart little mare and was a young man of excellent character, keen at a bargain, but none the worse liked by the Yankees, who, as I have heard them say, would rather be shaved with a sharp razor than a dull one. Especially was he beloved by the pretty girls along the Connecticut, whose favor he used to court by presents of the best smoking-tobacco in his stock, knowing well that the country-lasses of New England are generally great performers on pipes. Moreover, as will be seen in the course of my story, the pedler was inquisitive and something of a tattler, always itching to hear the news and anxious to tell it again.

After an early breakfast at Morristown the tobacco-ped-

ler—whose name was Dominicus Pike—had traveled seven miles through a solitary piece of woods without speaking a word to anybody but himself and his little gray mare. It being nearly seven o'clock, he was as eager to hold a morning gossip as a city shopkeeper to read the morning paper. An opportunity seemed at hand when, after lighting a cigar with a sun-glass, he looked up and perceived a man coming over the brow of the hill at the foot of which the pedler had stopped his green cart. Dominicus watched him as he descended, and noticed that he carried a bundle over his shoulder on the end of a stick and traveled with a weary yet determined pace. He did not look as if he had started in the freshness of the morning, but had footed it all night, and meant to do the same all day.

"Good morning, mister," said Dominicus, when within speaking distance. "You go a pretty good jog. What's the latest news at Parker's Falls?"

The man pulled the broad brim of a gray hat over his eyes, and answered, rather sullenly, that he did not come from Parker's Falls, which, as being the limit of his own day's journey, the pedler had naturally mentioned in his inquiry.

"Well, then," rejoined Dominicus Pike, "let's have the latest news where you did come from. I'm not particular about Parker's Falls. Any place will answer."

Being thus importuned, the traveler—who was as ill-looking a fellow as one would desire to meet in a solitary piece of woods—appeared to hesitate a little, as if he was either searching his memory for news or weighing the expediency of telling it. At last, mounting on the step of the cart, he whispered in the ear of Dominicus, though he might have shouted aloud and no other mortal would have heard him.

"I do remember one little trifle of news," said he. "Old Mr. Higginbotham of Kimballton was murdered in his orchard at

eight o'clock last night by an Irishman and a nigger. They strung him up to the branch of a St. Michael's pear-tree where nobody would find him till the morning."

As soon as this horrible intelligence was communicated the stranger betook himself to his journey again with more speed than ever, not even turning his head when Dominicus invited him to smoke a Spanish cigar and relate all the particulars. The pedler whistled to his mare and went up the hill, pondering on the doleful fate of Mr. Higginbotham, whom he had known in the way of trade, having sold him many a bunch of long nines and a great deal of pig-tail, lady's twist and fig tobacco. He was rather astonished at the rapidity with which the news had spread. Kimballton was nearly sixty miles distant in a straight line; the murder had been perpetrated only at eight o'clock the preceding night, yet Dominicus had heard of it at seven in the morning, when, in all probability, poor Mr. Higginbotham's own family had but just discovered his corpse hanging on the St. Michael's pear-tree. The stranger on foot must have worn seven-league boots, to travel at such a rate.

"Ill news flies fast, they say," thought Dominicus Pike, "but this beats railroads. The fellow ought to be hired to go express with the president's message."

The difficulty was solved by supposing that the narrator had made a mistake of one day in the date of the occurrence, so that our friend did not hesitate to introduce the story at every tavern and country-store along the road, expending a whole bunch of Spanish wrappers among at least twenty horrified audiences. He found himself invariably the first bearer of the intelligence, and was so pestered with questions that he could not avoid filling up the outline till it became quite a respectable narrative. He met with one piece of corroborative evidence. Mr. Higginbotham was a trader, and a former [illegible] of his [illegible] Dominic

icus related the facts testified that the old gentleman was accustomed to return home through the orchard about nightfall with the money and valuable papers of the store in his pocket. The clerk manifested but little grief at Mr. Higginbotham's catastrophe, hinting—what the pedler had discovered in his own dealings with him—that he was a crusty old fellow, as close as a vise. His property would descend to a pretty niece who was now keeping school in Kimballton.

What with telling the news for the public good and driving bargains for his own, Dominicus was so much delayed on the road that he chose to put up at a tavern about five miles short of Parker's Falls. After supper, lighting one of his prime cigars, he seated himself in the barroom and went through the story of the murder, which had grown so fast that it took him half an hour to tell. There were as many as twenty people in the room, nineteen of whom received it all for gospel. But the twentieth was an elderly farmer who had arrived on horseback a short time before and was now seated in a corner, smoking his pipe. When the story was concluded, he rose up very deliberately, brought his chair right in front of Dominicus and stared him full in the face, puffing out the vilest tobacco-smoke the pedler had ever smelled.

"Will you make affidavit," demanded he, in the tone of a country-justice taking an examination, "that old Squire Higginbotham of Kimballton was murdered in his orchard the night before last and found hanging on his great pear-tree yesterday morning?"

"I tell the story as I heard it, mister," answered Dominicus, dropping his half-burned cigar. "I don't say that I saw the thing done, so I can't take my oath that he was murdered exactly in that way."

"But I can take mine," said the farmer, "that if Squire

Higginbotham was murdered night before last I drank a glass of bitters with his ghost this morning. Being a neighbor of mine, he called me into his store as I was riding by, and treated me, and then asked me to do a little business for him on the road. He didn't seem to know any more about his own murder than I did."

"Why then it can't be a fact!" exclaimed Dominicus Pike.

"I guess he'd have mentioned, if it was," said the old farmer; and he removed his chair back to the corner, leaving Dominicus quite down in the mouth.

Here was a sad resurrection of old Mr. Higginbotham! The pedler had no heart to mingle in the conversation any more, but comforted himself with a glass of gin and water and went to bed, where all night long he dreamed of hanging on the St. Michael's pear-tree.

To avoid the old farmer (whom he so detested that his suspension would have pleased him better than Mr. Higginbotham's) Dominicus rose in the gray of the morning, put the little mare into the green cart and trotted swiftly away toward Parker's Falls. The fresh breeze, the dewy road and the pleasant summer dawn revived his spirits, and might have encouraged him to repeat the old story had there been anybody awake to hear it, but he met neither ox-team, light wagon, chaise, horseman or foot-traveler till, just as he crossed Salmon River, a man came trudging down to the bridge with a bundle over his shoulder, on the end of a stick.

"Good morning, mister," said the pedler, reining in his mare. "If you come from Kimballton or that neighborhood, maybe you can tell me the real fact about this affair of old Mr. Higginbotham. Was the old fellow actually murdered two or three nights ago by an Irishman and a nigger?"

Dominicus had spoken in too great hurry to observe at first that the stranger himself had a deep tinge of negro blood.

On hearing this sudden question the Ethiopian appeared to change his skin, its yellow hue becoming a ghastly white, while, shaking and stammering, he thus replied:

"No, no! There was no colored man. It was an Irishman that hanged him last night at eight o'clock; I came away at seven. His folks can't have looked for him in the orchard yet."

Scarcely had the yellow man spoken, when he interrupted himself and, though he seemed weary enough before, continued his journey at a pace which would have kept the pedler's mare on a smart trot. Dominicus stared after him in great perplexity. If the murder had not been committed till Tuesday night, who was the prophet that had foretold it in all its circumstances on Tuesday morning? If Mr. Higginbotham's corpse were not yet discovered by his own family, how came the mulatto, at above thirty miles distance, to know that he was hanging in the orchard, especially as he had left Kimballton before the unfortunate man was hanged at all? These ambiguous circumstances, with the stranger's surprise and terror, made Dominicus think of raising a hue-and-cry after him as an accomplice in the murder, since a murder, it seemed, had really been perpetrated.

"But let the poor devil go," thought the pedler. "I don't want his black blood on my head, and hanging the nigger wouldn't unhang Mr. Higginbotham. Unhang the old gentleman? It's a sin, I know, but I should hate to have him come to life a second time and give me the lie."

With these meditations Dominicus Pike drove into the street of Parker's Falls, which, as everybody knows, is as thriving a village as three cotton-factories and a slitting-mill can make it. The machinery was not in motion and but a few of the shop-doors unbarred when he alighted in the stable-yard of the tavern and made it his first business to order the mare four quarts

of oats. His second duty, of course, was to impart Mr. Higginbotham's catastrophe to the hostler. He deemed it advisable, however, not to be too positive as to the date of the direful fact, and also to be uncertain whether it were perpetrated by an Irishman and a mulatto or by the son of Erin alone. Neither did he profess to relate it on his own authority or that of any one person, but mentioned it as a report generally diffused.

The story ran through the town like fire among girdled trees, and became so much the universal talk that nobody could tell whence it had originated. Mr. Higginbotham was as well known at Parker's Falls as any citizen of the place, being part-owner of the slitting-mill and a considerable stock-holder in the cotton-factories. The inhabitants felt their own prosperity interested in his fate. Such was the excitement that the Parker's Falls *Gazette* anticipated its regular day of publication, and came out with half a form of blank paper and a column of double pica emphasized with capitals and headed "HORRID MURDER OF MR. HIGGINBOTHAM." Among other dreadful details, the printed account described the mark of the cord round the dead man's neck and stated the number of thousand dollars of which he had been robbed; there was much pathos, also, about the affliction of his niece, who had gone from one fainting-fit to another ever since her uncle was found hanging on the St. Michael's pear-tree with his pockets inside out. The village poet likewise commemorated the young lady's grief in seventeen stanzas of a ballad. The selectmen held a meeting, and in consideration of Mr. Higginbotham's claims on the town determined to issue handbills offering a reward of five hundred dollars for the apprehension of his murderers and the recovery of the stolen property.

Meanwhile, the whole population of Parker's Falls consisting of shopkeepers, mistresses of boarding-houses, factory-girls,

mill-men and schoolboys, rushed into the street and kept up such a terrible loquacity as more than compensated for the silence of the cotton-machines, which refrained from their usual din out of respect to the deceased. Had Mr. Higginbotham cared about posthumous renown, his untimely ghost would have exulted in this tumult.

Our friend Dominicus in his vanity of heart forgot his intended precautions, and, mounting on the town-pump, announced himself as the bearer of the authentic intelligence which had caused so wonderful a sensation. He immediately became the great man of the moment, and had just begun a new edition of the narrative with a voice like a field-preacher when the mail-stage drove into the village street. It had traveled all night, and must have shifted horses at Kimballton at three in the morning.

"Now we shall hear all the particulars!" shouted the crowd.

The coach rumbled up to the piazza of the tavern followed by a thousand people; for if any man had been minding his own business till then, he now left it at sixes and sevens to hear the news. The pedler, foremost in the race, discovered two passengers, both of whom had been startled from a comfortable nap to find themselves in the center of a mob. Every man assailing them with separate questions, all propounded at once, the couple were struck speechless, though one was a lawyer and the other a young lady.

"Mr. Higginbotham! Mr. Higginbotham! Tell us the particulars about old Mr. Higginbotham!" bawled the mob. "What is the coroner's verdict? Are the murderers apprehended? Is Mr. Higginbotham's niece come out of her fainting-fits? Mr. Higginbotham! Mr. Higginbotham!"

The coachman said not a word except to swear awfully at the hostler for not bringing him a fresh team of horses. The

lawyer inside had generally his wits about him even when asleep; the first thing he did after learning the cause of the excitement was to produce a large red pocketbook. Meantime, Dominicus Pike, being an extremely polite young man, and also suspecting that a female tongue would tell the story as glibly as a lawyer's, had handed the lady out of the coach. She was a fine, smart girl, now wide awake and bright as a button, and had such a sweet, pretty mouth that Dominicus would almost as lief have heard a love-tale from it as a tale of murder.

"Gentlemen and ladies," said the lawyer to the shopkeepers, the mill-men and the factory-girls, "I can assure you that some unaccountable mistake—or, more probably, a wilful falsehood maliciously contrived to injure Mr. Higginbotham's credit—has excited this singular uproar. We passed through Kimballton at three o'clock this morning, and most certainly should have been informed of the murder had any been perpetrated. But I have proof nearly as strong as Mr. Higginbotham's own oral testimony in the negative. Here is a note relating to a suit of his in the Connecticut courts which was delivered me from that gentleman himself. I find it dated at ten o'clock last evening."

So saying, the lawyer exhibited the date and signature of the note, which irrefragably proved either that this perverse Mr. Higginbotham was alive when he wrote it, or, as some deemed the more probable case of two doubtful ones, that he was so absorbed in worldly business as to continue to transact it even after his death. But unexpected evidence was forthcoming. The young lady, after listening to the pedler's explanation, merely seized a moment to smooth her gown and put her curls in order, and then appeared at the tavern door, making a modest signal to be heard.

"Good people," said she, "I am Mr. Higginbotham's niece."

A wondering murmur passed through the crowd on beholding her so rosy and bright—that same unhappy niece whom they had supposed, on the authority of the Parker's Falls *Gazette*, to be lying at death's door in a fainting-fit. But some shrewd fellows had doubted all along whether a young lady would be quite so desperate at the hanging of a rich old uncle.

"You see," continued Miss Higginbotham, with a smile, "that this strange story is quite unfounded as to myself, and I believe I may affirm it to be equally so in regard to my dear uncle Higginbotham. He has the kindness to give me a home in his house, though I contribute to my own support by teaching a school. I left Kimballton this morning to spend the vacation of commencement-week with a friend about five miles from Parker's Falls. My generous uncle, when he heard me on the stairs, called me to his bedside and gave me two dollars and fifty cents to pay my stage-fare, and another dollar for my extra expenses. He then laid his pocketbook under his pillow, shook hands with me, and advised me to take some biscuit in my bag instead of breakfasting on the road. I feel confident, therefore, that I left my beloved relative alive, and trust that I shall find him so on my return."

The young lady courtesied at the close of the speech, which was so sensible and well worded, and delivered with such grace and propriety, that everybody thought her fit to be preceptress of the best academy in the state. But a stranger would have supposed that Mr. Higginbotham was an object of abhorrence at Parker's Falls and that a thanksgiving had been proclaimed for his murder, so excessive was the wrath of the inhabitants on learning their mistake. The mill-men resolved to bestow public honors on Dominicus Pike, only hesitating whether to tar and feather him, ride him on a rail or refresh him with an ablution at the town pump, on the top of which he had declared

himself the bearer of the news. The selectmen, by advice of the lawyer, spoke of prosecuting him for a misdemeanor in circulating unfounded reports, to the great disturbance of the peace of the commonwealth. Nothing saved Dominicus either from mob-law or a court of justice but an eloquent appeal made by the young lady in his behalf. Addressing a few words of heartfelt gratitude to his benefactress, he mounted the green cart and rode out of town under a discharge of artillery from the schoolboys, who found plenty of ammunition in the neighboring clay-pits and mud-holes. As he turned his head to exchange a farewell glance with Mr. Higginbotham's niece a ball of the consistence of hasty-pudding hit him slap in the mouth, giving him a most grim aspect. His whole person was so bespattered with the like filthy missiles that he had almost a mind to ride back and supplicate for the threatened ablution at the town-pump; for, though not meant in kindness, it would now have been a deed of charity.

However, the sun shone bright on poor Dominicus, and the mud—an emblem of all stains of undeserved opprobrium—was easily brushed off when dry. Being a funny rogue, his heart soon cheered up; nor could he refrain from a hearty laugh at the uproar which his story had excited. The handbills of the selectmen would cause the commitment of all the vagabonds in the state, the paragraph in the Parker's Falls *Gazette* would be reprinted from Maine to Florida, and perhaps form an item in the London newspapers, and many a miser would tremble for his money-bags and life on learning the catastrophe of Mr. Higginbotham. The pedler meditated with much fervor on the charms of the young schoolmistress, and swore that Daniel Webster never spoke nor looked so like an angel as Miss Higginbotham while defending him from the wrathful populace at Parker's Falls.

Dominicus was now on the Kimballton turnpike, having all along determined to visit that place, though business had drawn him out of the most direct road from Morristown. As he approached the scene of the supposed murder he continued to revolve the circumstances in his mind and was astonished at the aspect which the whole case assumed. Had nothing occurred to corroborate the story of the first traveler, it might now have been considered as a hoax; but the yellow man was evidently acquainted either with the report or the fact, and there was a mystery in his dismayed and guilty look on being abruptly questioned. When to this singular combination of incidents it was added that the rumor tallied exactly with Mr. Higginbotham's character and habits of life, and that he had an orchard and a St. Michael's pear-tree, near which he always passed at nightfall, the circumstantial evidence appeared so strong that Dominicus doubted whether the autograph produced by the lawyer, or even the niece's direct testimony, ought to be equivalent. Making cautious inquiries along the road, the pedler further learned that Mr. Higginbotham had in his service an Irishman of doubtful character whom he had hired without a recommendation, on the score of economy.

"May I be hanged myself," exclaimed Dominicus Pike, aloud, on reaching the top of a lonely hill, "if I'll believe old Higginbotham is unhanged till I see him with my own eyes and hear it from his own mouth. And, as he's a real shaver, I'll have the minister, or some other responsible man, for an endorser."

It was growing dusk when he reached the toll-house on Kimballton turnpike, about a quarter of a mile from the village of this name. His little mare was fast bringing him up with a man on horseback who trotted through the gate a few rods in advance of him, nodded to the toll-gatherer and kept on toward

the village. Dominicus was acquainted with the toll-man, and while making change the usual remarks on the weather passed between them.

"I suppose," said the pedler, throwing back his whip-lash to bring it down like a feather on the mare's flank, "you have not seen anything of old Mr. Higginbotham within a day or two?"

"Yes," answered the toll-gatherer; "he passed the gate just before you drove up, and yonder he rides now, if you can see him through the dusk. He's been to Woodfield this afternoon, attending a sheriff's sale there The old man generally shakes hands and has a little chat with me, but to-night he nodded, as if to say, 'Charge my toll,' and jogged on; for, wherever he goes, he must always be at home by eight o'clock."

"So they tell me," said Dominicus.

"I never saw a man look so yellow and thin as the squire does," continued the toll-gatherer. "Says I to myself to-night, 'He's more like a ghost or an old mummy than good flesh and blood.'"

The pedler strained his eyes through the twilight, and could just discern the horseman now far ahead on the village road. He seemed to recognize the rear of Mr. Higginbotham, but through the evening shadows and amid the dust from the horse's feet the figure appeared dim and unsubstantial, as if the shape of the mysterious old man were faintly molded of darkness and gray light.

Dominicus shivered. "Mr. Higginbotham has come back from the other world by way of the Kimballton turnpike," thought he. He shook the reins and rode forward, ke
the same distance in the rear of the gray old shadow
was concealed by a bend of the road. On reachi
the pedler no longer saw the man on horseback

himself at the head of the village street, not far from a number of stores and two taverns clustered round the meeting-house steeple. On his left was a stone wall and a gate, the boundary of a wood-lot beyond which lay an orchard, farther still a mowing-field, and last of all a house. These were the premises of Mr. Higginbotham, whose dwelling stood beside the old highway, but had been left in the background by the Kimballton turnpike.

Dominicus knew the place, and the little mare stopped short by instinct, for he was not conscious of tightening the reins. "For the soul of me, I cannot get by this gate!" said he, trembling. "I never shall be my own man again till I see whether Mr. Higginbotham is hanging on the St. Michael's pear-tree." He leaped from the cart, gave the rein a turn round the gate-post, and ran along the green path of the wood-lot as if Old Nick were chasing behind. Just then the village clock tolled eight, and as each deep stroke fell Dominicus gave a fresh bound and flew faster than before, till, dim in the solitary center of the orchard, he saw the fated pear-tree. One great branch stretched from the old contorted trunk across the path and threw the darkest shadow on that one spot. But something seemed to struggle beneath the branch.

The pedler had never pretended to more courage than befits a man of peaceable occupation, nor could he account for his valor on this awful emergency. Certain it is, however, that he rushed forward, prostrated a sturdy Irishman with the butt-end of his whip, and found—not, indeed, hanging on the St. Michael's pear-tree, but trembling beneath it with a halter round his neck—the old identical Mr. Higginbotham.

"Mr. Higginbotham," said Dominicus, tremulously, "you're an honest man, and I'll take your word for it. Have you been hanged, or not?"

If the riddle be not already guessed, a few words will explain the simple machinery by which this "coming event" was made to cast "its shadow before." Three men had plotted the robbery and murder of Mr. Higginbotham; two of them successively lost courage and fled, each delaying the crime one night by their disappearance; the third was in the act of perpetration, when a champion, blindly obeying the call of fate, like the heroes of old romance, appeared in the person of Dominicus Pike.

It only remains to say that Mr. Higginbotham took the pedler into high favor, sanctioned his addresses to the pretty schoolmistress and settled his whole property on their children, allowing themselves the interest. In due time the old gentleman capped the climax of his favors by dying a Christian death in bed; since which melancholy event, Dominicus Pike has removed from Kimballton and established a large tobacco manufactory in my native village.—"*Twice-Told Tales.*"

N. P. Willis

Miss Albina McLush

I HAVE a passion for fat women. If there is anything I hate in life it is what dainty people call a *spirituelle*. Motion—rapid motion—a smart, quick, squirrel-like step, a pert, voluble tone—in short, a lively girl—is my exquisite horror! I would as lief have a *diable petit* dancing his infernal hornpipe on my cerebellum as to be in the room with one. I have tried before now to school myself into liking these parched peas of humanity. I have followed them with my eyes, and attended to their rattle till I was as crazy as a fly in a drum. I have danced with them, and romped with them in the country, and periled the salvation of my "white tights" by sitting near them at supper. I swear off from this moment. I do. I won't—no—hang me if ever I show another small, lively, *spry* woman a civility.

Albina McLush is divine. She is like the description of the Persian beauty by Hafiz: "Her heart is full of passion and her eyes are full of sleep." She is the sister of Lurly McLush, my old college chum, who, as early as his sophomore year, was chosen president of the *Dolce far niente* Society—no member of which was ever known to be surprised at anything (the college law of rising before breakfast excepted). Lurly introduced me to his sister one day, as he was lying upon a heap of turnips, leaning on his elbow with his head in his hand, in a green lane in the suburbs. He had driven over a stump, and been tossed out of his gig, and I came up just as he was wondering how in the d——l's name he got there! Albina sat quietly in the gig, and when I was presented, re-

quested me, with a delicious drawl, to say nothing about the adventure—it would be so troublesome to relate it to everybody! I loved her from that moment. Miss McLush was tall, and her shape, of its kind, was perfect. It was not a *fleshy* one exactly, but she was large and full. Her skin was clear, fine-grained and transparent; her temples and forehead perfectly rounded and polished, and her lips and chin swelling into a ripe and tempting pout, like the cleft of a bursted apricot. And then her eyes—large, liquid and sleepy—they languished beneath their long black fringes as if they had no business with daylight—like two magnificent dreams, surprised in their jet embryos by some bird-nesting cherub. Oh! it was lovely to look into them!

She sat, usually, upon a *fauteuil*, with her large, full arm embedded in the cushion, sometimes for hours without stirring. I have seen the wind lift the masses of dark hair from her shoulders when it seemed like the coming to life of a marble Hebe—she had been motionless so long. She was a model for a goddess of sleep as she sat with her eyes half-closed, lifting up their superb lids slowly as you spoke to her, and dropping them again with the deliberate motion of a cloud, when she had murmured out her syllable of assent. Her figure, in a sitting posture, presented a gentle declivity from the curve of her neck to the instep of the small round foot lying on its side upon the ottoman. I remember a fellow's bringing her a plate of fruit one evening. He was one of your lively men—a horrid monster, all right angles and activity. Having never been accustomed to hold her own plate, she had not well extricated her whole fingers from her handkerchief before he set it down in her lap. As it began to slide slowly toward her feet, her hand relapsed into the muslin folds, and she fixed her eye upon it with a kind of indolent surprise, droop-

ing her lids gradually till, as the fruit scattered over the ottoman, they closed entirely, and a liquid jet line was alone visible through the heavy lashes. There was an imperial indifference in it worthy of Juno.

Miss McLush rarely walks. When she does, it is with the deliberate majesty of a Dido. Her small, plump feet melt to the ground like snowflakes; and her figure sways to the indolent motion of her limbs with a glorious grace and yieldingness quite indescribable. She was idling slowly up the Mall one evening just at twilight, with a servant at a short distance behind her, who, to while away the time between his steps, was employing himself in throwing stones at the cows feeding upon the Common. A gentleman, with a natural admiration for her splendid person, addressed her. He might have done a more eccentric thing. Without troubling herself to look at him, she turned to her servant and requested him, with a yawn of desperate ennui, to knock that fellow down! John obeyed his orders; and, as his mistress resumed her lounge, picked up a new handful of pebbles, and tossing one at the nearest cow, loitered lazily after.

Such supreme indolence was irresistible. I gave in—I—who never before could summon energy to sigh—I—to whom a declaration was but a synonym for perspiration—I—who had only thought of love as a nervous complaint, and of women but to pray for a good deliverance—I—yes—I—knocked under. Albina McLush! Thou wert too exquisitely lazy. Human sensibilities cannot hold out forever.

I found her one morning sipping her coffee at twelve, with her eyes wide open. She was just from the bath, and her complexion had a soft, dewy transparency, like the cheek of Venus rising from the sea. It was the hour, Lurly had told me, when she would be at the trouble of thinking. She put away

with her dimpled forefinger, as I entered, a cluster of rich curls that had fallen over her face, and nodded to me like a water-lily swaying to the wind when its cup is full of rain.

"Lady Albina," said I, in my softest tone, "how are you?"

"Bettina," said she, addressing her maid in a voice as clouded and rich as the south wind on an Æolian, "how am I to-day?"

The conversation fell into short sentences. The dialogue became a monologue. I entered upon my declaration. With the assistance of Bettina, who supplied her mistress with cologne, I kept her attention alive through the incipient circumstances. Symptoms were soon told. I came to the avowal. Her hand lay reposing on the arm of the sofa, half-buried in a muslin *foulard*. I took it up and pressed the cool soft fingers to my lips—unforbidden. I rose and looked into her eyes for confirmation. Delicious creature—she was asleep!

I never have had courage to renew the subject. Miss McLush seems to have forgotten it altogether. Upon reflection, too, I'm convinced she would not survive the excitement of the ceremony—unless, indeed, she should sleep between the responses and the prayer. I am still devoted, however, and if there should come a war or an earthquake, or if the millennium should commence, as is expected in 18—, or if anything happens that can keep her waking so long, I shall deliver a declaration, abbreviated for me by a scholar-friend of mine, which, he warrants, may be articulated in fifteen minutes—without fatigue.

Love in a Cottage

THEY may talk of love in a cottage,
And bowers of trellised vine—
Of nature bewitchingly simple,
And milkmaids half-divine;
They may talk of the pleasure of sleeping
In the shade of a spreading tree,
And a walk in the fields at morning,
By the side of a footstep free!

But give me a sly flirtation
By the light of a chandelier—
With music to play in the pauses,
And nobody very near;
Or a seat on a silken sofa,
With a glass of pure old wine,
And mama too blind to discover
The small white hand in mine.

Your love in a cottage is hungry,
Your vine is a nest for flies—
Your milkmaid shocks the Graces,
And simplicity talks of pies!
You lie down to your shady slumber
And wake with a bug in your ear,
And your damsel that walks in the morning
Is shod like a mountaineer.

True love is at home on a carpet,
And mightily likes his ease—

And true love has an eye for a dinner,
  And starves beneath shady trees.
His wing is the fan of a lady,
  His foot's an invisible thing,
And his arrow is tipp'd with a jewel
  And shot from a silver string.

Tom Fane and I

"Common as light is love,
And its familiar voice wearies not ever."
—SHELLEY.

TOM FANE'S four Canadian ponies were whizzing his light phaeton through the sand at a rate that would have put spirits into anything but a lover absent from his mistress. The "heaven-kissing" pines towered on every side like the thousand and one columns of the Palæologi at Constantinople; their flat and spreading tops shutting out the light of heaven almost as effectually as the world of Mussulmans, mosques, kiosks, bazaars, and Giaours, sustained on those innumerable capitals, darkens the subterranean wonder of Stamboul. An American pine-forest is as like a temple, and a sublime one, as any dream that ever entered into the architectural brain of the slumbering Martin. The Yankee Methodists, in their camp-meetings, have but followed an irresistible instinct to worship God in the religious dimness of these interminable aisles of the wilderness.

Tom Fane and I had stoned the storks together in the palace of Crœsus at Sardis. We had read Anastasius on a mufti's

tomb in the *Nekropolis* of Scutari. We had burned with fig-fevers in the same caravansary at Smyrna. We had cooled our hot foreheads, and cursed the Greeks in emulous Romaic, in the dim tomb of Agamemnon at Argos. We had been grave at Paris, and merry at Rome, and we had picnicked with the beauties of the Fanar in the Valley of Sweet Waters in pleasant Rumelia; and when, after parting in France, he had returned to England and his regiment, and I to New England and law, whom should I meet in a summer's trip to the St. Lawrence but Capt. Tom Fane of the ——th, quartered at the cliff-perched and doughty garrison of Quebec, and ready for any "lark" that would vary the monotony of duty!

Having eaten seven mess-dinners, driven to the Falls of Montmorency, and paid my respects to Lord Dalhousie, the hospitable and able governor of the Canadas, Quebec had no longer a temptation; and obeying a magnet, of which more anon, I announced to Fane that my traps were packed, and my heart sent on, *à l'avant-courier*, to Saratoga.

"Is she pretty?" said Tom.

"As the starry-eyed Circassian we gazed at through the grill in the slave-market at Constantinople!" (Heaven and my mistress forgive me for the comparison! but it conveyed more to Tom Fane than a folio of more respectful similitudes.)

"Have you any objection to be drawn to your lady-love by four cattle that would buy the soul of Osbaldiston?"

"'Objection!' quotha?"

The next morning, four double-jointed and well-groomed ponies were munching their corn in the bow of a steamer upon the St. Lawrence, wondering, possibly, what in the name of Bucephalus had set the hills and churches flying at such a rate down the river. The hills and churches came to a standstill with the steamer opposite Montreal; and the ponies were

landed, and put to their mettle for some twenty miles, where they were destined to be astonished by a similar flying phenomenon in the mountains girding the lengthening waters of Lake Champlain. Landed at Ticonderoga, a few miles' trot brought them to Lake George and a third steamer; and, with a winding passage among green islands and overhanging precipices loaded like a harvest-wagon with vegetation, we made our last landing on the edge of the pine-forest, where our story opens.

"Well, I must object," says Tom, setting his whip in the socket, and edging round upon his driving-box, "I must object to this republican gravity of yours. I should take it for melancholy, did I not know it was the 'complexion' of your never-smiling countrymen."

"Spare me, Tom! 'I see a hand you cannot see.' Talk to your ponies, and let me be miserable, if you love me."

"For what, in the name of common-sense? Are you not within five hours of your mistress? Is not this cursed sand your natal soil? Do not

'The pine-boughs sing
Old songs with new gladness'?

and in the years that we have dangled about, 'here-and-there-ians' together, were you ever before grave, sad, or sulky? and will you without a precedent, and you a lawyer, inflict your stupidity upon me for the first time in this waste and beingless solitude? Half an hour more of the dread silence of this forest, and it will not need the horn of Astolpho to set me irremediably mad!"

"If employment will save your wits, you may invent a scheme for marrying the son of a poor gentleman to the ward of a rich trader in rice and molasses."

"The programme of our approaching campaign, I presume?"

"Simply."

"Is the lady willing?"

"I would fain believe so."

"Is Mr. Popkins unwilling?"

"As the most romantic lover could desire."

"And the state of the campaign?"

"Why, thus: Mr. George Washington Jefferson Frump, whom you have irreverently called Mr. Popkins, is sole guardian to the daughter of a dead West-Indian planter, of whom he was once the agent. I fell in love with Kate Lorimer from description, when she was at school with my sister, saw her by favor of a garden-wall, and after the usual vows——"

"Too romantic for a Yankee, by half!"

—"proposed by letter to Mr. Frump."

"Oh, bathos!"

"He refused me."

"Because——"

"*Imprimis*, I was not myself in the 'sugar line'; and *in secundis*, my father wore gloves, and 'did nothing for a living'—two blots in the eyes of Mr. Frump, which all the waters of Niagara would never wash from my escutcheon."

"And what the devil hindered you from running off with her?"

"Fifty shares in the Manhattan Insurance Company, a gold-mine in Florida, Heaven knows how many hogsheads of treacle, and a million of acres on the banks of the Missouri."

"'Pluto's flame-colored daughter' defend us! what a living El Dorado!"

"All of which she forfeits if she marries without old Frump's consent."

"I see, I see! And this Io and her Argus are now drinking the waters at Saratoga?"

"Even so."

"I'll bet you my four-in-hand to a sonnet, that I get her for you before the season is over."

"Money and all?"

"Mines, molasses, and Missouri acres!"

"And if you do, Tom, I'll give you a team of Virginian bloods that would astonish Ascot, and throw you into the bargain a forgiveness for riding over me with your camel on the banks of the Hermus."

"Santa Maria! do you remember that spongy foot stepping over your frontispiece? I had already cast my eyes up to Mont Sipylus to choose a clean niche for you out of the rock-hewn tombs of the kings of Lydia. I thought you would sleep with Alyattis, Phil!"

We dashed on through dark forest and open clearing, through glens of tangled cedar and wild vine, over log bridges, corduroy marshes, and sand-hills, till, toward evening, a scattering shanty or two, and an occasional sound of a woodman's ax, betokened our vicinity to Saratoga. A turn around a clump of tall pines brought us immediately into the broad street of the village; and the flaunting shops, the overgrown, unsightly hotels, riddled with windows like honeycombs, the fashionable idlers out for their evening lounge to the waters, the indolent smokers on the colonnades, and the dusty and loaded coaches driving from door to door in search of lodgings, formed the usual evening picture of the Bath of America.

As it was necessary to Tom's plan that my arrival at Saratoga should not be known, he pulled up at a small tavern at the entrance of the street, and, dropping me and my baggage, drove on to Congress Hall, with my best prayers, and a letter of introduction to my sister, whom I had left on her way to the Springs with a party at my departure for Montreal. Unwilling

to remain in such a tantalizing vicinity, I hired a chaise the next morning, and, despatching a note to Tom, drove to seek a retreat at Barhydt's—a spot that cannot well be described in the tail of a paragraph.

Herr Barhydt is an old Dutch settler, who, till the mineral-springs of Saratoga were discovered some five miles from his door, was buried in the depth of a forest solitude, unknown to all but the prowling Indian. The sky is supported above him (or looks to be) by a wilderness of straight, columnar pine shafts, gigantic in girth, and with no foliage except at the top, where they branch out like round tables spread for a banquet in the clouds. A small, ear-shaped lake, sunk as deep into the earth as the firs shoot above it, black as Erebus in the dim shadow of its hilly shore, and the obstructed light of the trees that nearly meet over it, and clear and unbroken as a mirror, save the pearl spots of the thousand lotuses holding up their cups to the blue eye of heaven that peers through the leafy vault, sleeps beneath his window; and around him in the forest lies, still unbroken, the elastic and brown carpet of the faded pine-tassels, deposited in yearly layers since the continent rose from the flood, and rotted a foot beneath the surface to a rich mold that would fatten the Symplegades to a flower-garden. With his black tarn well stocked with trout, his bit of a farm in the clearing near by, and an old Dutch Bible, Herr Barhydt lived a life of Dutch musing, talked Dutch to his geese and chickens, sang Dutch psalms to the echoes of the mighty forest, and, except on his far-between visits to Albany, which grew rarer and rarer as the old Dutch inhabitants dropped faster away, saw never a white human face from one maple-blossoming to another.

A roving mineralogist tasted the waters of Saratoga; and, like the work of a lath-and-plaster Aladdin, up sprung a thriving

village around the fountain's lip, and hotels, tin tumblers, and apothecaries multiplied in the usual proportion to each other, but out of all precedent with everything else for rapidity. Libraries, newspapers, churches, livery-stables, and lawyers followed in their train; and it was soon established, from the Plains of Abraham to the savannas of Alabama, that no person of fashionable taste or broken constitution could exist through the months of July and August without a visit to the chalybeate springs and populous village of Saratoga. It contained seven thousand inhabitants before Herr Barhydt, living in his wooded seclusion only five miles off, became aware of its existence. A pair of lovers, philandering about the forest on horseback, popped in upon him one June morning; and thenceforth there was no rest for the soul of the Dutchman. Everybody rode down to eat his trout, and make love in the dark shades of his mirrored lagoon; and at last, in self-defense, he added a room or two to his shanty, enclosed his cabbage garden, and put a price upon his trout dinners. The traveler nowadays, who has not dined at Barhydt's, with his own champagne cold from the tarn, and the white-headed old settler "gargling" Dutch about the house, in his manifold vocation of cook, hostler, and waiter, may as well not have seen Niagara.

Installed in the back chamber of the old man's last addition to his house, with Barry Cornwall and Elia (old fellow-travelers of mine), a rude chair, a ruder but clean bed, and a troop of thoughts so perpetually from home that it mattered very little what was the complexion of anything about me, I waited Tom's operations with a lover's usual patience. Barhydt's visitors seldom arrived before two or three o'clock; and the long, soft mornings, quiet as a shadowy Elysium on the rim of that ebon lake, were as solitary as a melancholy man could desire. Didst thou but know, O gentle Barry

Cornwall! how gratefully thou hast been read and mused upon in those dim and whispering aisles of the forest, three thousand and more miles from thy smoky whereabouts, methinks it would warm up the flush of pleasure around thine eyelids, though the "golden-tressed Adelaide" were waiting her good-night kisses at thy knee!

I could stand it no longer. On the second evening of my seclusion, I made bold to borrow old Barhydt's superannuated roadster, and, getting up the steam with infinite difficulty in his rickety engine, higgled away, with a pace to which I could not venture to affix a name, to the gay scenes of Saratoga.

It was ten o'clock when I dismounted at the stable in Congress Hall, and giving *Der Teufel*, as the old man ambitiously styled his steed, to the hands of the hostler, stole round through the garden to the eastern colonnade.

I feel called upon to describe "Congress Hall." Some fourteen or fifteen millions of white gentlemen and ladies consider that wooden and windowed Babylon as the proper palace of Delight—a sojourn to be sighed for and sacrificed for and economized for; the birthplace of Love, the haunt of Hymen, the arena of Fashion; a place without which a new lease of life were valueless, for which, if the conjuring cap of King Erricus itself could not furnish a season-ticket, it might lie on a lady's toilet as unnoticed as a bride's nightcap a twelvemonth after marriage. I say to myself sometimes, as I pass the window at White's, and see a world-sick worldling with the curl of satiety and disgust on his lip, wondering how the next hour will come to its death. "If you but knew, my friend, what a campaign of pleasure you are losing in America—what belles than the bluebells slighter and fairer; what hearts than the dew-drops fresher and clearer, are living their pretty hour, like gems undived for in the ocean; what loads of foliage, what

Titans of trees, what glorious wildernesses of rocks and waters, are lavishing their splendors on the clouds that sail over them; and all within the magic circle of which Congress Hall is the center, and which a circling dove would measure to get an appetite for his breakfast—if you but knew this, my lord, as I know it, you would not be gazing so vacantly on the steps of Crockford's, nor consider 'the graybeard' such a laggard in his hours."

Congress Hall is a wooden building, of which the size and capacity could never be definitely ascertained. It is built on a slight elevation, just above the strongly impregnated spring whose name it bears; with little attempt at architecture, save a spacious and vine-covered colonnade, serving as a promenade, on either side, and two wings, the extremities of which are lost in the distance. A relic or two of the still-astonished forest towers above the chimneys, in the shape of a melancholy group of firs; and, five minutes' walk from the door, the dim old wilderness stands looking down on the village in its primeval grandeur, like the spirits of the wronged Indians whose tracks are scarce vanished from the sand. In the strength of the summer solstice, from five hundred to a thousand people dine together at Congress Hall; and, after absorbing as many bottles of the best wines of the world, a sunset promenade plays the valve to the sentiment thus generated, and, with a cup of tea, the crowd separates to dress for the nightly ball. There are several other hotels in the village, equally crowded and equally spacious; and the ball is given alternately at each. Congress Hall is the "crack" place, however, and I expect that Mr. Westcott, the obliging proprietor, will give me the preference of rooms, on my next annual visit, for this just and honorable mention.

The dinner-tables were piled into an orchestra, and draped

with green baize and green wreaths; the floor of the immense hall was chalked with American flags and the initials of all the heroes of the Revolution; and the band was playing a waltz in a style that made the candles quiver, and the pines tremble audibly in their tassels. The ballroom was on the ground floor; and the colonnade upon the garden side was crowded with spectators, a row of grinning black fellows edging the cluster of heads at every window, and keeping time with their hands and feet in the irresistible sympathy of their music-loving natures. Drawing my hat over my eyes, I stood at the least-thronged window, and, concealing my face in the curtain, waited impatiently for the appearance of the dancers.

The bevy in the drawing-room was sufficiently strong at last; and the lady patronesses, handed in by a State governor or two, and here and there a member of Congress, achieved the *entrée* with their usual intrepidity. Followed beaux and followed belles. *Such* belles! Slight, delicate, fragile-looking creatures, elegant as Retzsch's angels, warm-eyed as Mohammedan houris, yet timid as the antelope whose hazel orbs they eclipse, limbed like nothing earthly except an American woman—I would rather not go on. When I speak of the beauty of my countrywomen, my heart swells. I do believe the New World has a newer mold for its mothers and daughters. I *think* I am not prejudiced. I have been years away. I have sighed in France; I have loved in Italy; I have bargained for Circassians in an Eastern bezestein; and I have lounged at Howell and James's on a sunny day in the season; and my eye is trained and my perceptions quickened; but I *do* think (Honor bright! and Heath's "Book of Beauty" forgiving me) that there is no such beautiful work of God under the arch of the sky as an American girl in her bellehood.

Enter Tom Fane in a Stultz coat and Sparding tights, looking

as a man who had been the mirror of Bond Street might be supposed to look a thousand leagues from his club-house. *She* leaned on his arm. I had never seen her half so lovely. Fresh and calm from the seclusion of her chamber, her transparent cheek was just tinged with the first mounting blood from the excitement of lights and music. Her lips were slightly parted, her fine-lined eyebrows were arched with a girlish surprise, and her ungloved arm lay carelessly and confidingly within his, as white, round, and slender as if Canova had wrought it in Parian for his Psyche. If you have never seen a beauty of Northern blood nurtured in a Southern clime, the cold fairness of her race warmed up as if it had been steeped in some golden sunset, and her deep blue eye darkened and filled with a fire as unnaturally resplendent as the fusion of chrysoprase into a diamond; and if you have never known the corresponding contrast in the character—the intelligence and constancy of the North kindling with the enthusiasm and impulse, the passionateness, and the *abandon* of a more burning latitude—you have seen nothing, let me insinuate, though you "have been i' the Indies twice," that could give you an idea of Kate Lorimer.

She waltzed, and then Tom danced with my sister; and then, resigning her to another partner, he offered his arm again to Miss Lorimer, and left the ballroom with several other couples for a turn in the fresh air of the colonnade. I was not jealous, but I felt unpleasantly at his returning to her so immediately. He was the handsomest man, out of all comparison, in the room; and he had dimmed my star too often in our rambles in Europe and Asia not to suggest a thought, at least, that the same pleasant eclipse might occur in our American astronomy. I stepped off the colonnade, and took a turn in the garden.

Those "children of eternity," as Walter Savage Landor

poetically calls the breezes, performed their soothing ministry upon my temples; and I replaced Tom in my confidence with an heroic effort, and turned back. A swing hung between two gigantic pines, just under the balustrade; and, flinging myself into the cushioned seat, I abandoned myself to the musings natural to a person "in my situation." The sentimentalizing promenaders lounged backward and forward above me, and, not hearing Tom's drawl among them, I presumed he had returned to the ballroom. A lady and gentleman, walking in silence, stopped presently, and leaned upon the railing opposite the swing. They stood a moment, looking into the dim shadow of the pine-grove; and then a voice, that I knew better than my own, remarked in a low and silvery tone upon the beauty of the night.

She was not answered; and after a moment's pause, as if resuming a conversation that had been interrupted, she turned very earnestly to her companion, and asked, "Are you sure, quite *sure*, that you could venture to marry without a fortune?"

"Quite, dear Miss Lorimer."

I started from the swing; but, before the words of execration that rushed choking from my heart could struggle to my lips, they had mingled with the crowd, and vanished.

I strode down the garden walk in a frenzy of passion. Should I call him immediately to account? Should I rush into the ballroom, and accuse him of his treachery to her face? Should I drown myself in old Barhydt's tarn, or join an Indian tribe, and make war upon the whites? Or should I, *could* I, be magnanimous, and write him a note immediately, offering to be his groomsman at the wedding?

I stepped into the punch-room, asked for pen, ink, and paper, and indited the following note:

DEAR TOM,—If your approaching nuptials are to be sufficiently public to admit of a groomsman, you will make me the happiest of friends by selecting me for that office.

Yours ever truly,

PHIL.

Having despatched it to his room, I flew to the stable, roused *Der Teufel*, who had gathered up his legs in the straw for the night, flogged him furiously out of the village, and, giving him the rein as he entered the forest, enjoyed the scenery in the humor of mad old Hieronymo in the Spanish tragedy, "the moon dark, the stars extinct, the winds blowing, the owls shrieking, the toads croaking, the minutes jarring, and the clock striking twelve."

Early the next day Tom's "tiger" dismounted at Barhydt's door, with an answer to my note as follows:—

DEAR PHIL,—The Devil must have informed you of a secret I supposed safe from all the world. Be assured I should have chosen no one but yourself to support me on the occasion; and however you have discovered my design upon your treasure, a thousand thanks for your generous consent. I expected no less from your noble nature. Yours devotedly,

TOM.

P.S. I shall endeavor to be at Barhydt's, with materials for the fifth act of our comedy, to-morrow morning.

"'Comedy!' call you this, Mr. Fane?" I felt my heart turn black as I threw down the letter. After a thousand plans of revenge formed and abandoned, borrowing old Barhydt's rifles, loading them deliberately, and discharging them again into the air, I flung myself exhausted on the bed, and reasoned myself back to my magnanimity. I *would* be his groomsman!

It was a morning like the burst of a millennium on the world. I felt as if I should never forgive the birds for their mocking enjoyment of it. The wild heron swung up from the reeds, the lotuses shook out their dew into the lake as the breeze stirred them, and the senseless old Dutchman sat fishing in his canoe, singing one of his unintelligible psalms to a quick measure that half-maddened me. I threw myself upon the yielding floor of pine-tassels on the edge of the lake, and, with the wretched school philosophy, "*Si gravis est, brevis est,*" endeavored to put down the tempest of my feelings.

A carriage rattled over the little bridge, mounted the ascent rapidly, and brought up at Barhydt's door.

"Phil!" shouted Tom, "Phil!"

I gulped down a choking sensation in my throat, and rushed up the bank to him. A stranger was dismounting from his horse.

"Quick!" said Tom, shaking my hand hurriedly, "there is no time to lose. Out with your inkhorn, Mr. Poppletree, and have your paper signed while I tie up my ponies."

"What is this, sir?" said I, starting back as the stranger deliberately presented me with a paper, in which my own name was written in conspicuous letters.

The magistrate gazed at me with a look of astonishment. "A contract of marriage, I think, between Mr. Philip Slingsby and Miss Katherine Lorimer, spinster. Are you the gentleman named in that instrument, sir?"

At this moment my sister, leading the blushing girl by the hand, came and threw her arms about my neck, and, drawing her within my reach, ran off and left us together.

There are some pure moments in this life that description would only profane.

We were married by the village magistrate, in that mag-

nificent sanctuary of the forest, old Barhydt and his lotuses the only indifferent witnesses of vows as passionate as ever trembled upon human lips.

I had scarce pressed her to my heart and dashed the tears from my eyes, when Fane, who had looked more at my sister than at the bride during the ceremony, left her suddenly, and, thrusting a roll of parchment into my pocket, ran off to bring up his ponies. I was on the way to Saratoga, a married man, and my bride on the seat beside me, before I had recovered from my astonishment.

"Pray," said Tom, "if it be not an impertinent question, and you can find breath in your ecstasies, how did you find out that your sister had done me the honor to accept the offer of my hand?"

The resounding woods rung with his unmerciful laughter at the explanation.

"And pray," said I, in my turn, "if it is not an impertinent question, and you can find a spare breath in *your* ecstasies, by what magic did you persuade old Frump to trust his ward and her title-deeds in your treacherous keeping?"

"It is a long story, my dear Phil, and I will give you the particulars when you pay me the 'Virginia bloods' you wot of. Suffice it for the present, that Mr. Frump believes Mr. Tom Fane (*alias* Jacob Phipps, Esq., sleeping partner of a banking-house at Liverpool) to be the accepted of his fair ward. In his extreme delight at seeing her in so fair a way to marry into a bank, he generously made her a present of her own fortune, signed over his right to control it by a document in your possession, and will undergo as agreeable a surprise in about five minutes as the greatest lover of excitement could desire."

The ponies dashed on. The sandy ascent by the Pavilion

Spring was surmounted, and in another minute we were at the door of Congress Hall. The last stragglers from the breakfast-table were lounging down the colonnade, and old Frump sat reading the newspaper under the portico.

"Aha! Mr. Phipps," said he, as Tom drove up, "back so soon, eh? Why, I thought you and Kitty would be billing it till dinner-time!"

"Sir!" said Tom very gravely, "you have the honor of addressing Capt. Thomas Fane, of His Majesty's ——th Fusileers; and whenever you have a moment's leisure, I shall be happy to submit to your perusal a certificate of the marriage of Miss Katherine Lorimer to the gentleman I have the pleasure to present to you—Mr. Frump, Mr. Slingsby!"

At the mention of my name, the blood in Mr. Frump's ruddy complexion turned suddenly to the color of the Tiber. Poetry alone can express the feeling pictured in his countenance:

> "If every atom of a dead man's flesh
> Should creep, each one with a particular life,
> Yet all as cold as ever—'twas just so;
> Or had it drizzled needle-points of frost
> Upon a feverish head made suddenly bald."

George Washington Jefferson Frump, Esq., left Congress Hall the same evening, and has since ungraciously refused an invitation to Captain Fane's wedding—possibly from his having neglected to invite him on a similar occasion at Saratoga. This last, however, I am free to say, is a gratuitous supposition of my own.—"*Prose Writings.*"

Edmund Quincy

Who Paid for the Prima Donna?

I

"If anything could make a man forgive himself for being sixty years old," said the Consul, holding up his wine-glass between his eye and the setting sun—for it was summer-time—"it would be that he can remember Malibran in her divine sixteenity at the Park Theater, thirty-odd years ago. Egad, sir, one couldn't help making great allowances for *Don Giovanni*, after seeing her in *Zerlina*. She was beyond imagination *piquante* and delicious."

The Consul, as my readers may have partly inferred, was not a Roman consul, nor yet a French one. He had had the honor of representing this great republic at one of the Hanse towns, I forget which, in President Monroe's time. I don't recollect how long he held the office; but it was long enough to make the title stick to him for the rest of his life with the tenacity of a militia colonelcy or village diaconate. The country people round about used to call him "the *Counsel*," which, I believe—for I am not very fresh from my school-books—was etymologically correct enough, however orthoepically erroneous. He had not limited his European life, however, within the precinct of his Hanseatic consulship, but had dispersed himself very promiscuously over the Continent, and had seen many cities, and the manners of many men and of some women—singing-women, I mean—in their public character; for the Consul, correct of life as of ear, never sought to undeify his divini-

ties by pursuing them from the heaven of the stage to the purgatorial intermediacy of the *coulisses*, still less to the lower depth of disenchantment into which too many of them sunk in their private life.

"Yes sir," he went on, "I have seen and heard them all—Catalani, Pasta, Pezzaroni, Grisi, and all the rest of them, even Sonntag, though not in her very best estate; but I give you my word there is none that has taken lodgings here," tapping his forehead, "so permanently as the Signorina Garcia, or that I can see and hear so distinctly when I am in the mood of it by myself. *Rosina*, *Desdemona*, *Cinderella*, and, as I said just now, *Zerlina*—she is as fresh in them all to my mind's eye and ear as if the Park Theater had not given way to a cursed shoe-shop, and I had been hearing her there only last night. Let's drink her memory," the Consul added, half in mirth and half in melancholy—a mood to which he was not unused, and which did not ill become him.

Now, no intelligent person who knew the excellence of the Consul's wine could refuse to pay this posthumous honor to the harmonious shade of the lost Muse. The Consul was an old-fashioned man in his tastes, to be sure, and held to the old religion of Madeira, which divided the faith of our fathers with the Cambridge Platform, and had never given in to the later heresies which have crept into the communion of good-fellowship from the south of France and the Rhine.

"A glass of champagne," he would say, "is all well enough at the end of dinner, just to take the grease out of one's throat, and get the palate ready for the more serious vintages ordained for the solemn and deliberate drinking by which man justifies his creation; but Madeira, sir, Madeira is the only standby that never fails a man, and can always be depended upon as something sure and steadfast."

I confess to having fallen away myself from the gracious doctrine and works to which he had held so fast; but I am no bigot—which, for a heretic, is something remarkable—and had no scruple about uniting with him in the service he proposed, without demur or protestation as to form or substance. Indeed, he disarmed fanaticism by the curious care he bestowed on making his works comformable to the faith that was in him; for partly by inheritance, and partly by industrious pains, his old house was undermined by a cellar of wine such as is seldom seen in these days of modern degeneracy. He is the last gentleman that I know of, of that old school that used to import their own wine and lay it down annually themselves, their bins forming a kind of vinous calendar suggestive of great events. Their degenerate sons are content to be furnished, as they want it, from the dubious stores of the vintner, by retail.

"I suppose it was her youth and beauty, sir," I suggested, "that made her so rememberable to you. You know she was barely turned seventeen when she sang in this country."

"Partly that, no doubt," replied the Consul, "but not altogether, nor chiefly. No, sir, it was her genius which made her beauty so glorious. She was wonderfully handsome, though 'She was a fantom of delight,' as that Lake fellow says"—it was thus profanely that the Consul designated the poet Wordsworth, whom he could not abide—"and the best thing he ever said, by Jove!"

"And did you never see her again?" I inquired.

"Once only," he answered, "eight or nine years afterward, a year or two before she died. It was at Venice, and in *Norma*. She was different, and yet not changed for the worse. There was an indescribable look of sadness out of her eyes, that touched one oddly, and fixed itself in the memory. But she was something apart and by herself, and stamped herself on

one's mind as Rachel did in *Camille* or *Phèdre.* It was true genius, and no imitation, that made both of them what they were. But she actually had the physical beauty which Rachel only compelled you to think she had, by the force of her genius and consummate dramatic skill, while she was on the scene before you."

"But do you rank Malibran with Rachel as a dramatic artist?" I asked.

"I cannot tell," he answered. "But if she had not the studied perfection of Rachel—which was always the same, and could not be altered without harm—she had at least a capacity of impulsive self-adaptation about her which made her for the time the character she personated—not always the same, but such as the woman she represented might have been in the shifting phases of the passion that possessed her. And to think that she died at eight and twenty! What might not ten years more have made her!"

"It is odd," I observed, "that her fame should be forever connected with the name she got by her first unlucky marriage in New York; for it was unlucky enough, I believe—was it not?"

"You may say that," responded the Consul, "without fear of denial or qualification. It was disgraceful in its beginning and in its ending. It was a swindle on a large scale; and poor Maria Garcia was the one who suffered the most by the operation."

"I have always heard," said I, "that old Garcia was cheated out of the price for which he had sold his daughter, and that M. Malibran got his wife on false pretenses."

"Not altogether so," returned the Consul. "I happen to know all about that matter from the best authority. She was obtained on false pretenses, to be sure; but it was not Garcia

that suffered by them. M. Malibran, moreover, never paid the price agreed upon, and yet Garcia got it, for all that."

"Indeed!" I exclaimed. "It must have been a neat operation. I cannot exactly see how the thing was done; but I have no doubt a tale hangs thereby, and a good one. Is it tellable?"

"I see no reason why not," said the Consul. "The sufferer made no secret of it, and I know of no reason why I should. Mynheer Van Holland told me the story himself, in Amsterdam, in the year '35."

"And who was he?" I inquired, "and what had he to do with it?"

"I'll tell you," responded the Consul, filling his glass, and passing the bottle, "if you will have the goodness to shut the window behind you, and ring for candles; for it gets chilly here among the mountains as soon as the sun is down."

I beg your pardon—did you make a remark? Oh, *what mountains!* You must really pardon me; I cannot give you such a clue as that to the identity of my dear Consul, just now, for excellent and sufficient reasons. But, if you have paid your money for the sight of this Number, you may take your choice of all the mountain-ranges on the continent, from the Rocky to the White, and settle him just where you like. Only you must leave a gap to the westward, through which the river—also anonymous for the present distress—breaks its way, and which gives him half an hour's more sunshine than he would otherwise be entitled to, and slope the fields down to its margin near a mile off, with their native timber thinned so skilfully as to have the effect of the best landscape-gardening. It is a grand and lovely scene; and when I look at it, I do not wonder at one of the Consul's apothegms—namely, that the chief advantage of foreign travel is, that it teaches you that one place is just as good to live in as another. I imagine that the one place

he had in his mind at the time was just this one. But that is neither here nor there. When candles came, we drew our chairs together, and he told me in substance the following story. I will tell it in my own words—not that they are so good as his, but because they come more readily to the nib of my pen.

II

NEW YORK has grown considerably since she was New Amsterdam, and has almost forgotten her whilom dependence on her first godmother. Indeed, had it not been for the historic industry of the erudite Diedrich Knickerbocker, very few of her sons would know much about the obligations of their nursing mother to their old grandam beyond sea, in the days of the Dutch dynasty. Still, though the old monopoly has been dead these two hundred years, or thereabout, there is I know not how many fold more traffic with her than in the days when it was in full life and force. Doth not that benefactor of his species, Mr. Udolpho Wolfe, derive thence his immortal or immortalizing Schiedam Schnapps, the virtues whereof, according to his advertisements, are fast transferring dram-drinking from the domain of pleasure to that of positive duty? Tobacco-pipes, too, and toys such as the friendly saint, whom Protestant children have been taught by Dutch tradition to invoke, delights to drop into the votive stocking—they come from the mother-city, where she sits upon the waters, quite as much a Sea-Cybele as Venice herself. And linens, too, fair and fresh and pure as the maidens that weave them, come forth from Dutch looms ready to grace our tables, or to deck our beds. And the mention of these brings me back to my story, though the immediate connection between Holland linen and Mali-

bran's marriage may not at first view be palpable to sight. Still it is a fact that the web of this part of her variegated destiny was spur and woven out of threads of flax that took the substantial shape of fine Hollands; and this is the way in which it came to pass.

Mynheer Van Holland, of whom the Consul spoke just now, you must understand to have been one of the chief merchants of Amsterdam, a city whose merchants are princes, and have been kings. His transactions extended to all parts of the Old World, and did not skip over the New. His ships visited the harbor of New York as well as of London; and, as he died two or three years ago a very rich man, his adventures in general must have been more remunerative than the one I am going to relate. In the autumn of the year 1825 it seemed good to this worthy merchant to despatch a vessel, with a cargo chiefly made up of linens, to the market of New York. The honest man little dreamed with what a fate his ship was fraught, wrapped up in those flaxen folds. He happened to be in London the winter before, and was present at the *début* of Maria Garcia at the King's Theater. He must have admired the beauty, grace, and promise of the youthful *Rosina*, had he been ten times a Dutchman; and if he heard of her intended emigration to America, as he possibly might have done, it most likely excited no particular emotion in his phlegmatic bosom. He could not have imagined that the exportation of a little singing-girl to New York should interfere with a potential venture of his own in fair linen. The gods kindly hid the future from his eyes, so that he might enjoy the comic vexation her lively sallies caused to *Doctor Bartolo* in the play, unknowing that she would be the innocent cause of a more serious provocation to himself in downright earnest. He thought of this himself after it had all happened.

Well, the good ship *Steenbok* had prosperous gales and fair weather across the ocean, and dropped anchor off the Battery with some days to spare from the amount due to the voyage. The consignee came off and took possession of the cargo, and duly transferred it to his own warehouse. Though the advantages of advertising were not as fully understood in those days of comparative ignorance as they have been since, he duly announced the goods which he had received, and waited for a customer. He did not have to wait long. It was but a day or two after the appearance of the advertisement in the newspapers that he had prime Holland linens on hand, just received from Amsterdam, when he was waited upon by a gentleman of good address, and evidently of French extraction, who inquired of the consignee, whom we will call Mr. Schulemberg for the nonce, "whether he had the linens he had advertised yet on hand."

"They are still on hand and on sale," said Mr. Schulemberg.

"What is the price of the entire consignment?" inquired the customer.

"Fifty thousand dollars," responded Mr. Schulemberg.

"And the terms?"

"Cash on delivery."

"Very good," replied the obliging buyer. "If they be of the quality you describe in your advertisement, I will take them on those terms. Send them down to my warehouse, No. 118 Pearl Street, to-morrow morning, and I will send you the money."

"And your name?" inquired Mr. Schulemberg.

"Is Malibran," responded the courteous purchaser.

The two merchants bowed politely, the one to the other, mutually well pleased with the morning's work, and bade each other good day.

Mr. Schulemberg knew but little, if anything, about his new customer; but, as the transaction was to be a cash one, he did not mind that. He calculated his commissions, gave orders to his head clerk to see the goods duly delivered the next morning, and went on 'Change, and thence to dinner, in the enjoyment of a complacent mind and a good appetite. It is to be supposed that M. Malibran did the same. At any rate, he had the most reason, at least, according to his probable notions of mercantile morality and success.

III

THE next day came, and with it came, betimes, the packages of linens to M. Malibran's warehouse in Pearl Street; but the price for the same did not come as punctually to Mr. Schulemberg's counting-room, according to the contract under which they were delivered. In point of fact, M. Malibran was not in at the time; but there was no doubt that he would attend to the matter without delay, as soon as he came in. A cash transaction does not necessarily imply so much the instant presence of coin as the unequivocal absence of credit. A day or two more or less is of no material consequence, only there is to be no delay for sales and returns before payment. So Mr. Schulemberg gave himself no uneasiness about the matter when two, three, and even five and six days had slid away without producing the apparition of the current money of the merchant. A man who transacted affairs on so large a scale as M. Malibran, and conducted them on the sound basis of ready money, might safely be trusted for so short a time. But when a week had elapsed, and no tidings had been received either of purchaser or purchase-money, Mr. Schulemberg thought it time for himself to interfere in his own proper person.

Accordingly, he incontinently proceeded to the counting-house of M. Malibran to receive the promised price, or to know the reason why. If he failed to obtain the one satisfaction, he at least could not complain of being disappointed of the other. Matters seemed to be in some little unbusiness-like confusion, and the clerks in a high state of gleeful excitement. Addressing himself to the chief among them, Mr. Schulemberg asked the pertinent question:

"Is M. Malibran in?"

"No, sir," was the answer, "he is not; and he will not be, just at present."

"But when will he be in? For I must see him on some pressing business of importance."

"Not to-day, sir," replied the clerk, smiling expressively. "He cannot be interrupted to-day on any business of any kind whatever."

"The deuce he can't!" returned Mr. Schulemberg. "I'll see about that very soon, I can tell you. He promised to pay me cash for fifty thousand dollars' worth of Holland linens a week ago. I have not seen the color of his money yet, and I mean to wait no longer. Where does he live? For, if he be alive, I will see him, and hear what he has to say for himself, and that speedily."

"Indeed, sir," pleasantly expostulated the clerk, "I think when you understand the circumstances of the case, you will forbear disturbing M. Malibran this day of all others in his life."

"Why, what the devil ails this day above all others," said Mr. Schulemberg somewhat testily, "that he can't see his creditors, and pay his debts on it?"

"Why, sir, the fact is," the clerk replied, with an air of interest and importance, "it is M. Malibran's wedding-day.

He marries this morning the Signorina Garcia, and I am sure you would not molest him with business on such an occasion as that."

"But my fifty thousand dollars!" persisted the consignee. "And why have they not been paid?"

"Oh, give yourself no uneasiness at all about that, sir," replied the clerk, with the air of one to whom the handling of such trifles was a daily occurrence. "M. Malibran will, of course, attend to that matter the moment he is a little at leisure. In fact, I imagine, that, in the hurry and bustle inseparable from an event of this nature, the circumstance has entirely escaped his mind; but, as soon as he returns to business again, I will recall it to his recollection, and you will hear from him without delay."

The clerk was right in his augury as to the effect his intelligence would have upon the creditor. It was not a clerical error on his part when he supposed that Mr. Schulemberg would not choose to enact the part of skeleton at the wedding-breakfast of the young *Prima Donna*. There is something about the great events of life, which cannot happen a great many times to anybody—

> "A wedding or a funeral,
> A mourning or a festival,"

that touches the strings of the one human heart of us all, and makes it return no uncertain sound. *Shylock* himself would hardly have demanded his pound of flesh on the wedding-day, had it been *Antonio* that was to espouse the fair *Portia*. Even he would have allowed three days of grace before demanding the specific performance of his bond. Now, Mr. Schulemberg was very far from being a Shylock, and he was also a constant

attendant upon the opera, and a devoted admirer of the lovely Garcia. So he could not wonder that a man on the eve of marriage with that divine creature should forget every other consideration in the immediate contemplation of his happiness, even if it were the consideration for a cargo of prime linens, and one to the tune of fifty thousand dollars. And it is altogether likely that the mundane reflection occurred to him, and made him easier in his mind under the delay, that old Garcia was by no means the kind of man to give away a daughter who dropped gold and silver from her sweet lips whenever she opened them in public, as the princess in the fairy-tale did pearls and diamonds, to any man who could not give him a solid equivalent in return. So that, in fact, he regarded the notes of the Signorina Garcia as so much collateral security for his debt.

So Mr. Schulemberg was content to bide his reasonable time for the discharge of M. Malibran's indebtedness to his principal. He had advised Mynheer Van Holland of the speedy sale of his consignment, and given him hopes of a quick return of the proceeds. But, as days wore away, it seemed to him that the time he was called on to bide was growing into an unreasonable one. I cannot state with precision exactly how long he waited. Whether he disturbed the sweet influences of the honeymoon by his intrusive presence, or permitted that nectareous satellite to fill her horns, and wax and wane in peace, before he sought to bring the bridegroom down to the things of earth, are questions which I must leave to the discretion of my readers to settle, each for himself or herself, according to their own notions of the proprieties of the case. But at the proper time, after patience had thrown up in disgust the office of a virtue, he took his hat and cane one fine morning, and walked down to No. 118 Pearl Street, for the double purpose

of wishing M. Malibran joy of his marriage, and of receiving the price—promised long, and long withheld—of the linens which form the tissue of my story.

"The gods gave ear, and granted half his prayer:
The rest the winds dispersed in empty air."

There was not the slightest difficulty about his imparting his epithalamic congratulation; but as to his receiving the numismatic consideration for which he hoped in return, that was an entirely different affair. He found matters in the Pearl Street counting-house again apparently something out of joint, but with a less smiling and sunny atmosphere pervading them than he had remarked on his last visit. He was received by M. Malibran with courtesy, a little overstrained, perhaps, and not as flowing and gracious as at their first interview. Preliminaries over, Mr. Schulemberg, plunging with epic energy into the midst of things, said, "I have called, M. Malibran, to receive the fifty thousand dollars which, you will remember, you engaged to pay down for the linens I sold you on such a day. I can make allowance for the interruption which has prevented your attending to this business sooner; but it is now high time that it was settled."

"I consent to it all, monsieur," replied M. Malibran with a deprecatory gesture. "You have reason, and I am desolated that it is the impossible that you ask of me to do!"

"How, sir!" demanded the creditor. "What do you mean by the impossible? You do not mean to deny that you agreed to pay cash for the goods?"

"My faith, no, monsieur," shruggingly responded M. Malibran. "I avow it; you have reason; I promised to pay the money, as you say it; but, if I have not the money to pay you, how can I pay you the money? What to do?"

"I don't understand you, sir," returned Mr. Schulemberg. "You have not the money? And you do not mean to pay me, according to agreement?"

"But, monsieur, how can I, when I have not money? Have you not heard that I have made—what you call it?—failure, yesterday? I am grieved of it thrice sensibly; but if it went of my life, I could not pay you for your fine linens, which were of a good market at the price."

"Indeed, sir," replied Mr. Schulemberg, "I had not heard of your misfortunes; and I am heartily sorry for them, on my own account and yours, but still more on account of your charming wife. But there is no great harm done, after all. Send the linens back to me, and accounts shall be square between us, and I will submit to the loss of the interest."

"Ah, but, monsieur, you are too good, and madame will be recognizant to you forever for your gracious politeness. But, my God! it is impossible that I return to you the linen. I have sold it, monsieur—I have sold it all!"

"Sold it?" reiterated Mr. Schulemberg, regardless of the rules of etiquette—"sold it? And to whom, pray, and when?"

"To M. Garcia, my father-in-the-law," answered the catechumen blandly; "and it is a week that he has received it."

"Then I must bid you a good morning, sir," said Mr. Schulemberg, rising hastily, and collecting his hat and gloves; "for I must lose no time in taking measures to recover the goods before they have changed hands again."

"Pardon, monsieur," interrupted the poor but honest Malibran. "But it is too late! One cannot regain them. M. Garcia embarked himself for Mexico yesterday morning, and carried them all with him."

Imagine the consternation and rage of poor Mr. Schulemberg at finding that he was sold, though the goods were not! I

decline reporting the conversation any further, lest its strength of expression and force of expletive might be too much for the more queasy of my readers. Suffice it to say that the *swindler*, if I may be allowed the royalty of coining a word, at once freed his own mind, and imprisoned the body of M. Malibran; for in those days imprisonment for debt was a recognized institution, and I think few of its strongest opponents will deny that this was a case to which it was no abuse to apply it.

IV

I REGRET that I am compelled to leave this exemplary merchant in captivity; but the exigencies of my story, the moral of which beckons me away to the distant coast of Mexico, require it at my hands. The reader may be consoled, however, by the knowledge that he obtained his liberation in due time, his Dutch creditor being entirely satisfied that nothing whatsoever could be squeezed out of him by passing him between the bars of the debtor's prison, though that was all the satisfaction he ever did get. How he accompanied his young wife to Europe, and there lived by the coining of her voice into drachmas, as her father had done before him, needs not to be told here; nor yet how she was divorced from him, and made another matrimonial venture in partnership with De B——. I have nothing to do with him or her, after the bargain and sale of which she was the object, and the consequences which immediately resulted from it; and here, accordingly, I take my leave of them. But my story is not quite done yet: it must now pursue the fortunes of the enterprising *impresario*, Signor Garcia, who had so deftly turned his daughter into a ship-load of fine linens.

This excellent person sailed, as M. Malibran told Mr. Schulemberg, for Vera Cruz, with an assorted cargo, consisting of

singers, fiddlers, and, as aforesaid, of Mynheer Van Holland's fine linens. The voyage was as prosperous as was due to such an argosy. If a single Amphion could not be drowned by the utmost malice of gods and men, so long as he kept his voice in order, what possible mishap could befall a whole shipload of them? The vessel arrived safely under the shadow of San Juan de Ulua; and her precious freight in all its varieties was welcomed with a tropical enthusiasm. The market was bare of linen and of song, and it was hard to say which found the readiest sale. Competition raised the price of both articles to a fabulous height. So the good Garcia had the benevolent satisfaction of clothing the naked, and making the ears that heard him to bless him at the same time. After selling his linens at a great advance on the cost-price, considering he had only paid his daughter for them, and having given a series of the most successful concerts ever known in those latitudes, Signor Garcia set forth for the Aztec City. As the relations of *meum* and *tuum* were not upon the most satisfactory footing just then at Vera Cruz, he thought it most prudent to carry his well-won treasure with him to the capital. His progress thither was a triumphal procession. Not Cortés, not General Scott himself, marched more gloriously along the steep and rugged road that leads from the seacoast to the table-land than did this son of song. Every city on his line of march was the monument of a victory, and from each one he levied tribute, and bore spoils away. And the vanquished thanked him for this spoiling of their goods.

Arrived at the splendid city, at that time the largest and most populous on the North American continent, he speedily made himself master of it—a welcome conqueror. The Mexicans, with the genuine love for song of their southern ancestors, had had but few opportunities for gratifying it such

as that now offered to them. Garcia was a tenor of great compass, and a most skilful and accomplished singer. The artists who accompanied him were of a high order of merit, if not of the very first class. Mexico had never heard the like, and, though a hard-money country, was glad to take their notes, and give them gold in return. They were feasted and flattered in the intervals of the concerts, and the bright eyes of señoras and señoritas rained influence upon them on the off nights, as their fair hands rained flowers upon the *on* ones. And they have a very pleasant way, in those golden realms, of giving ornaments of diamonds and other precious stones to virtuous singers, as we give pencil-cases and gold watches to meritorious railway-conductors and hotel-clerks, as a testimonial of the sense we entertain of their private characters and public services. The gorgeous East herself never showered "on her kings barbaric pearl and gold" with a richer hand than the city of Mexico poured out the glittering rain over the portly person of the happy Garcia. Saturated at length with the golden flood and its foam of pearl and diamond—if, indeed, singer were ever capable of such saturation, and were not rather permeable forever, like a sieve of the Danaïdes—saturated, or satisfied that it was all run out, he prepared to take up his line of march back again to the City of the True Cross. Mexico mourned over his going, and sent him forth upon his way with blessings, and prayers for his safe return.

But alas! the blessings and the prayers were alike vain. The saints were either deaf or busy, or had gone a journey, and either did not hear or did not mind the vows that were sent up to them. At any rate, they did not take that care of the worthy Garcia which their devotees had a right to expect of them. Turning his back on the halls of the Montezumas, where he had reveled so sumptuously, he proceeded on his way toward

the Atlantic coast, as fast as his mules thought fit to carry him and his beloved treasure. With the proceeds of his linens and his lungs, he was rich enough to retire from the vicissitudes of operatic life to some safe retreat in his native Spain or his adoptive Italy. Filled with happy imaginings, he fared onward, the bells of his mules keeping time with the melodious joy of his heart, until he had descended from the *tierra caliente* to the wilder region on the hither side of Jalapa. As the narrow road turned sharply, at the foot of a steeper descent than common, into a dreary valley, made yet more gloomy by the shadow of the hill behind intercepting the sun, though the afternoon was not far advanced, the *impresario* was made unpleasantly aware of the transitory nature of man's hopes and the vanity of his joys. When his train wound into the rough open space, it found itself surrounded by a troop of men whose looks and gestures bespoke their function without the intermediation of an interpreter. But no interpreter was needed in this case, as Signor Garcia was a Spaniard by birth, and their expressive pantomime was a sufficiently eloquent substitute for speech. In plain English, he had fallen among thieves, with very little chance of any good Samaritan coming by to help him.

Now, Signor Garcia had had dealings with brigands and banditti all his operatic life. Indeed, he had often drilled them till they were perfect in their exercises, and got them up regardless of expense. Under his direction they had often rushed forward to the footlights, pouring into the helpless mass before them repeated volleys of explosive crotchets. But this was a very different chorus that now saluted his eyes. It was the real thing, instead of the make-believe, and in the opinion of Signor Garcia, at least, very much inferior to it. Instead of the steeple-crowned hat, jauntily feathered and looped, these

irregulars wore huge *sombreros*, much the worse for time and weather, flapped over their faces. For the velvet jacket with the two-inch tail, which had nearly broken up the friendship between Mr. Pickwick and Mr. Tupman, when the latter gentleman proposed induing himself with one, on the occasion of Mrs. Leo Hunter's fancy-dress breakfast—for this integument, I say, these minions of the moon had blankets round their shoulders, thrown back in preparation for actual service. Instead of those authentic cross-garterings in which your true bandit rejoices, like a new Malvolio, to tie up his legs, perhaps to keep them from running away, these false knaves wore, some of them, ragged boots up to their thighs, while others had no crural coverings at all, and only rough sandals, such as the Indians there use, between their feet and the ground. They were picturesque, perhaps, but not attractive to wealthy travelers. But the wealthy travelers were attractive to them: so they came together, all the same. Such as they were, however, there they were, fierce, sad, and sallow, with vicious-looking knives in their belts, and guns of various parentage in their hands, while their captain bade our good man stand and deliver.

There was no room for choice. He had an escort, to be sure; but it was entirely unequal to the emergency, even if it were not, as was afterward shrewdly suspected, in league with the robbers. The enemy had the advantage of arms, position, and numbers; and there was nothing for him to do but to disgorge his hoarded gains at once, or to have his breath stopped first, and his estate summarily administered upon afterward, by these his casual heirs, as the King of France, by virtue of his *Droit d'Aubaine*, would have confiscated Yorick's six shirts and pair of black silk breeches, in spite of his eloquent protest against such injustice, had he chanced to die in his Most

Christian Majesty's dominions. As Signor Garcia had an estate in his breath, from which he could draw a larger yearly rent than the rolls of many a Spanish grandee could boast, he wisely chose the part of discretion, and surrendered at the same. His new acquaintances showed themselves expert practitioners in the breaking open of trunks and the rifling of treasure-boxes. All his beloved doubloons, all his cherished dollars, for the which no Yankee ever felt a stronger passion, took swift wings, and flew from his coffers to alight in the hands of the adversary. The sacred recesses of his pockets, and those of his companions, were sacred no longer from the sacrilegious hands of the spoilers. The breastpins were ravished from the shirt-frills—for in those days studs were not—and the rings snatched from the reluctant fingers. All the shining testimonials of Mexican admiration were transferred with the celerity of magic into the possession of the chivalry of the road. Not Faulconbridge himself could have been more resolved to come on at the beckoning of gold and silver than were they, and, good Catholics though they were, it is most likely that Bell, Book, and Candle would have had as little restraining influence over them as he professed to feel.

At last they rested from their labors. To the victors belonged the spoils, as they discovered with instinctive sagacity that they should do, though the apothegm had not yet received the authentic seal of American statesmanship. Science and skill had done their utmost, and poor Garcia and his companions in misery stood in the center of the ring, stripped of everything but the clothes on their backs. The duty of the day being satisfactorily performed, the victors felt that they had a right to some relaxation after their toils. And now a change came over them which might have reminded Signor Garcia of the banditti of the green-room, with whose habits he had been so

long familiar, and whose operations he had himself directed. Some one of the troop, who, however "fit for stratagems and spoils," had yet music in his soul, called aloud for a song. The idea was hailed with acclamations. Not satisfied with the capitalized results of his voice to which they had helped themselves, they were unwilling to let their prey go until they had also ravished from him some specimens of the airy mintage whence they had issued. Accordingly the Catholic vagabonds seated themselves on the ground, a fuliginous parterre to look upon, and called upon Garcia for a song. A rock which projected itself from the side of the hill served for a stage as well as the "green plat" in the wood near Athens did for the company of Manager Quince, and there was no need of "a tiring-room," as poor Garcia had no clothes to change for those he stood in. Not the Hebrews by the waters of Babylon, when their captors demanded of them a song of Zion, had less stomach for the task. But the prime tenor was now before an audience that would brook neither denial nor excuse. Nor hoarseness, nor catarrh, nor sudden illness, certified unto by the friendly physician, would avail him now. The demand was irresistible; for, when he hesitated, the persuasive though stern mouth of a musket hinted to him in expressive silence that he had better prevent its speech with song.

So he had to make his first appearance upon that "unworthy scaffold," before an audience which, multifold as his experience had been, was one such as he had never sung to yet. As the shadows of evening began to fall, rough torches of pine-wood were lighted, and shed a glare such as Salvator Rosa loved to kindle, upon a scene such as he delighted to paint. The rascals had taste; that the tenor himself could not deny. They knew the choice bits of the operas which held the stage forty years ago, and they called for them wisely, and applauded

his efforts vociferously. Nay, more, in the height of their enthusiasm they would toss him one of his own doubloons or dollars, instead of the bouquets usually hurled at well-deserving singers. They well judged that these flowers that never fade would be the tribute he would value most, and so they rewarded his meritorious strains out of his own stores, as Claude Duval or Richard Turpin, in the golden days of highway robbery, would sometimes generously return a guinea to a traveler he had just lightened of his purse, to enable him to continue his journey. It was lucky for the unfortunate Garcia that their approbation took this solid shape, or he would have been badly off indeed; for it was all he had to begin the world with over again. After his appreciating audience had exhausted their musical repertory, and had as many encores as they thought good, they broke up the concert, and betook themselves to their fastnesses among the mountains, leaving their patient to find his way to the coast as best he might, with a pocket as light as his soul was heavy. At Vera Cruz a concert or two furnished him with the means of embarking himself and his troop for Europe, and leaving the New World forever behind him.

And here I must leave him, for my story is done. The reader hungering for a moral may discern that, though Signor Garcia received the price he asked for his lovely daughter, it advantaged him nothing, and that he not only lost it all, but it was the occasion of his losing everything else he had. This is very well as far as it goes; but then it is equally true that M. Malibran actually obtained his wife, and that Mynheer Van Holland paid for her. I dare say all this can be reconciled with the eternal fitness of things; but I protest I don't see how it is to be done. It is "all a muddle" in my mind. I cannot even affirm that the banditti were ever hanged; and I am quite

sure that the unlucky Dutch merchant whose goods were so comically mixed up with this whole history never had any poetical or material justice for his loss of them. But it is as much the reader's business as mine to settle these casuistries. I only undertook to tell him who it was that paid for the *Prima Donna*—and I have done it.

V

"I CONSIDER that a good story," said the Consul, when he had finished the narration out of which I have compounded the foregoing, "and, what is not always the case with a good story, it is a true one."

I cordially concurred with my honored friend in this opinion, and if the reader should unfortunately differ from me on this point, I beg him to believe that it is entirely my fault. As the Consul told it to me, it was an excellent good story.

"Poor Mynheer Van Holland," he added, laughing, "never got over that adventure. Not that the loss was material to him—he was too rich for that—but the provocation of his fifty thousand dollars going to a parcel of Mexican *ladrones*, after buying an opera-singer for a Frenchman on its way, was enough to rouse even Dutch human nature to the swearing-point. He could not abide either Frenchmen or opera-singers all the rest of his life. And, by Jove! I don't wonder at it."

Nor I, neither, for the matter of that.

—"*Wensley and Other Stories.*"

Oliver Wendell Holmes

An Aphorism and a Lecture

ONE of the boys mentioned, the other evening, in the course of a very pleasant poem he read us, a little trick of the Commons table-boarders, which I, nourished at the parental board, had never heard of. Young fellows being always hungry—— Allow me to stop dead short, in order to utter an aphorism which has been forming itself in one of the blank interior spaces of my intelligence, like a crystal in the cavity of a geode.

Aphorism by the Professor

In order to know whether a human being is young or old, offer it food of different kinds at short intervals. If young, it will eat anything at any hour of the day or night. If old, it observes stated periods, and you might as well attempt to regulate the time of high-water to suit a fishing-party as to change these periods.

The crucial experiment is this. Offer a bulky and boggy bun to the suspected individual just ten minutes before dinner. If this is eagerly accepted and devoured, the fact of youth is established. If the subject of the question starts back and expresses surprise and incredulity, as if you could not possibly be in earnest, the fact of maturity is no less clear.

—Excuse me—I return to my story of the Commons-table. Young fellows being always hungry, and tea and dry toast

being the meager fare of the evening meal, it was a trick of some of the boys to impale a slice of meat upon a fork at dinner-time and stick the fork holding it beneath the table, so that they could get it at tea-time. The dragons that guarded this table of the Hesperides found out the trick at last and kept a sharp lookout for missing forks—they knew where to find one if it was not in its place. Now the odd thing was that, after waiting so many years to hear of this college trick, I should hear it mentioned a *second time* within the same twenty-four hours by a college youth of the present generation. Strange, but true. And so it has happened to me and to every person, often and often, to be hit in rapid succession by these twinned facts or thoughts, as if they were linked like chain-shot.

I was going to leave the simple reader to wonder over this, taking it as an unexplained marvel. I think, however, I will turn over a furrow of subsoil in it. The explanation is, of course, that in a great many thoughts there must be a few coincidences, and these instantly arrest our attention. Now we shall probably never have the least idea of the enormous number of impressions which pass through our consciousness, until in some future life we see the photographic record of our thoughts and the stereoscopic picture of our actions. There go more pieces to make up a conscious life or a living body than you think for. Why, some of you were surprised when a friend of mine told you there were fifty-eight separate pieces in a fiddle. How many "swimming glands"—solid, organized, regularly formed, rounded disks, taking an active part in all your vital processes, part and parcel, each one of them, of your corporal being—do you suppose are whirled along like pebbles in a stream with the blood which warms your frame and colors your cheeks? A noted German physiologist spread out a minute drop of blood under the microscope, in

narrow streaks, and counted the globules, and then made a calculation. The counting by the micrometer took him a *week*. You have, my full-grown friend, of these little couriers in crimson or scarlet livery, running on your vital errands day and night as long as you live, sixty-five billions five hundred and seventy thousand millions, errors excepted. Did I hear some gentleman say "Doubted?" I am the Professor; I sit in my chair with a petard under it that will blow me through the skylight of my lecture-room if I do not know what I am talking about and whom I am quoting.

Now, my dear friends, who are putting your hands to your foreheads and saying to yourselves that you feel a little confused, as if you had been waltzing until things began to whirl slightly round you, is it possible that you do not clearly apprehend the exact connection of all that I have been saying and its bearing on what is now to come? Listen, then. The number of these living elements in our bodies illustrates the incalculable multitude of our thoughts; the number of our thoughts accounts for those frequent coincidences spoken of; these coincidences in the world of thought illustrate those which we constantly observe in the world of outward events, of which the presence of the young girl now at our table, and proving to be the daughter of an old acquaintance some of us may remember, is the special example which led me through this labyrinth of reflections, and finally lands me at the commencement of this young girl's story, which, as I said, I have found the time and felt the interest to learn something of, and which I think I can tell without wronging the unconscious subject of my brief delineation.

Oliver Wendell Holmes

A Short Lecture on Phrenology

Read to the Boarders at Our Breakfast-Table

I shall begin, my friends, with the definition of a *pseudoscience.* A pseudoscience consists of a *nomenclature,* with a self-adjusting arrangement, by which all positive evidence, or such as favors its doctrines, is admitted, and all negative evidence, or such as tells against it, is excluded. It is invariably connected with some lucrative practical application. Its professors and practitioners are usually shrewd people; they are very serious with the public, but wink and laugh a good deal among themselves. The believing multitude consists of women of both sexes, feeble-minded inquirers, poetical optimists, people who always get cheated in buying horses, philanthropists who insist on hurrying up the millennium, and others of this class, with here and there a clergyman, less frequently a lawyer, very rarely a physician, and almost never a horse-jockey or a member of the detective police. I did not say that Phrenology was one of the pseudosciences.

A pseudoscience does not necessarily consist wholly of lies. It may contain many truths, and even valuable ones. The rottenest bank starts with a little specie. It puts out a thousand promises to pay on the strength of a single dollar, but the dollar is very commonly a good one. The practitioners of the pseudosciences know that common minds, after they have been baited with a real fact or two, will jump at the merest rag of a lie, or even at the bare hook. When we have one fact for us, we are very apt to supply the next out of our own imagin-

tion. (How many persons can read Judges xv. 16 correctly the first time?) The pseudosciences take advantage of this. I did not say that it was so with Phrenology.

I have rarely met a sensible man who would not allow that there was *something* in Phrenology. A broad, high forehead, it is commonly agreed, promises intellect; one that is "villainous low," and has a huge hind-head back of it, is wont to mark an animal nature. I have as rarely met an unbiased and sensible man who really believed in the bumps. It is observed, however, that persons with what the phrenologists call "good heads" are more prone than others toward plenary belief in the doctrine.

It is so hard to prove a negative, that if a man should assert that the moon was in truth a green cheese, formed by the coagulable substance of the Milky Way, and challenge me to prove the contrary, I might be puzzled. But if he offer to sell me a ton of this lunar cheese, I call on him to prove the truth of the caseous nature of our satellite before I purchase.

It is not necessary to prove the falsity of the phrenological statement. It is only necessary to show that its truth is not proved, and cannot be, by the common course of argument. The walls of the head are double, with a great air-chamber between them, over the smallest and most closely crowded "organs." Can you tell how much money there is in a safe, which also has thick double walls, by kneading its knobs with your fingers? So when a man fumbles about my forehead, and talks about the organs of *Individuality*, *Size*, etc., I trust him as much as I should if he felt of the outside of my strong-box and told me that there was a five-dollar or a ten-dollar bill under this or that particular rivet. Perhaps there is; *only he doesn't know anything about it.* But this is a point that I,

the Professor, understand, my friends, or ought to, certainly, better than you do. The next argument you will all appreciate.

I proceed, therefore, to explain the self-adjusting mechanism of Phrenology, which is *very similar* to that of the pseudo-sciences. An example will show it most conveniently.

A—— is a notorious thief. Messrs. Bumpus and Crane examine him and find a good-sized organ of Acquisitiveness. Positive fact for Phrenology. Casts and drawings of A—— are multiplied, and the bump *does not lose* in the act of copying. —I did not say it gained.—What do you look so for? (to the boarders).

Presently B—— turns up, a bigger thief than A——. But B—— has no bump at all over Acquisitiveness. Negative fact; goes against Phrenology. Not a bit of it. Don't you see how small Conscientiousness is? *That's* the reason B—— stole.

And then comes C——, ten times as much a thief as either A—— or B——; used to steal before he was weaned, and would pick one of his own pockets and put its contents in another, if he could find no other way of committing petty larceny. Unfortunately, C—— has a *hollow*, instead of a bump, over Acquisitiveness. Ah! but just look and see what a bump of Alimentiveness! Did not C—— buy nuts and gingerbread, when a boy, with the money he stole? Of course you see why he is a thief, and how his example confirms our noble science.

At last comes along a case which is apparently a *settler*, for there is a little brain with vast and varied powers—a case like that of Byron, for instance. Then comes out the grand reserve-reason which covers everything and renders it simply impossible ever to corner a phrenologist. "It is not the size alone,

but the *quality* of an organ, which determines its degree of power."

Oh! oh! I see. The argument may be briefly stated thus by the phrenologist: "Heads I win, tails you lose." Well, that's convenient.

It must be confessed that Phrenology has a certain resemblance to the pseudosciences. I did not say it was a pseudoscience.

I have often met persons who have been altogether struck up and amazed at the accuracy with which some wandering Professor of Phrenology had read their characters written upon their skulls. Of course, the Professor acquires his information solely through his cranial inspections and manipulations. What are you laughing at? (to the boarders). But let us just *suppose*, for a moment, that a tolerably cunning fellow, who did not know or care anything about Phrenology, should open a shop and undertake to read off people's characters at fifty cents or a dollar apiece. Let us see how well he could get along without the "organs."

I will suppose myself to set up such a shop. I would invest one hundred dollars, more or less, in casts of brains, skulls, charts, and other matters that would make the most show for the money. That would do to begin with. I would then advertise myself as the celebrated Professor Brainey, or whatever name I might choose, and wait for my first customer—a middle-aged man. I look at him, ask him a question or two, so as to hear him talk. When I have got the hang of him, I ask him to sit down, and proceed to fumble his skull, dictating as follows:

Oliver Wendell Holmes

SCALE FROM 1 TO 10

LIST OF FACULTIES FOR CUSTOMER	PRIVATE NOTES FOR MY PUPIL *Each to be accompanied with a wink*
Amativeness, 7	Most men love the conflicting sex, and all men love to be told they do.
Alimentiveness, 8	Don't you see that he has burst off his lowest waistcoat button with feeding—hey?
Acquisitiveness, 8	Of course. A middle-aged Yankee.
Approbativeness, 7, +	Hat well brushed. Hair ditto. Mark the effect of that *plus* sign.
Self-esteem, 6	His face shows that.
Benevolence, 9	That'll please him.
Conscientiousness, 8½	That fraction looks first rate.
Mirthfulness, 7	Has laughed twice since he came in.
Ideality, 9	That sounds well.
Form, Size, Weight, Color, Locality, Eventuality, etc., etc.	4 to 6. Average everything that can't be guessed.

And so of other faculties

Of course, you know, that isn't the way the phrenologists do. They go only by the bumps. What do you keep laughing so for? (to the boarders). I only said that is the way *I* should practise "Phrenology" for a living.

Foreign Correspondence

Do I think that the particular form of lying often seen in newspapers under the title, "From Our Foreign Correspondent," does any harm? Why, no, I don't know that it does. I suppose it doesn't really deceive people any more than the "Arabian Nights" or "Gulliver's Travels" do. Sometimes

the writers compile *too* carelessly, though, and mix up facts out of geographies and stories out of the penny papers, so as to mislead those who are desirous of information. I cut a piece out of one of the papers the other day which contains a number of improbabilities and, I suspect, misstatements. I will send up and get it for you, if you would like to hear it. Ah, this is it; it is headed

"OUR SUMATRA CORRESPONDENCE

"This island is now the property of the Stamford family—having been won, it is said, in a raffle by Sir—— Stamford, during the stock-gambling mania of the South Sea scheme. The history of this gentleman may be found in an interesting series of questions (unfortunately not yet answered) contained in the 'Notes and Queries.' This island is entirely surrounded by the ocean, which here contains a large amount of saline substance, crystallizing in cubes remarkable for their symmetry, and frequently displays on its surface, during calm weather, the rainbow tints of the celebrated South Sea bubbles. The summers are oppressively hot, and the winters very probably cold; but this fact cannot be ascertained precisely, as, for some peculiar reason, the mercury in these latitudes never shrinks, as in more northern regions, and thus the thermometer is rendered useless in winter.

"The principal vegetable productions of the island are the pepper-tree and the breadfruit-tree. Pepper being very abundantly produced, a benevolent society was organized in London during the last century for supplying the natives with vinegar and oysters, as an addition to that delightful condiment. (Note received from Dr. D. P.) It is said, however, that, as the oysters were of the kind called *natives* in England, the natives of Sumatra, in obedience to a natural instinct, refused to touch

them, and confined themselves entirely to the crew of the vessel in which they were brought over. This information was received from one of the oldest inhabitants, a native himself, and exceedingly fond of missionaries. He is said also to be very skilful in the *cuisine* peculiar to the island.

"During the season of gathering pepper, the persons employed are subject to various incommodities, the chief of which is violent and long-continued sternutation, or sneezing. Such is the vehemence of these attacks that the unfortunate subjects of them are often driven backward for great distances at immense speed, on the well-known principle of the æolipile. Not being able to see where they are going, these poor creatures dash themselves to pieces against the rocks, or are precipitated over the cliffs, and thus many valuable lives are lost annually. As during the whole pepper harvest they feed exclusively on this stimulant, they become exceedingly irritable. The smallest injury is resented with ungovernable rage. A young man suffering from the *pepper-fever*, as it is called, cudgeled another most severely for appropriating a superannuated relative of trifling value, and was only pacified by having a present made him of a pig of that peculiar species of swine called the *Peccavi* by the Catholic Jews, who, it is well known, abstain from swine's flesh in imitation of the Mohammedan Buddhists.

"The bread-tree grows abundantly. Its branches are well known to Europe and America under the familiar name of *macaroni*. The smaller twigs are called *vermicelli*. They have a decided animal flavor, as may be observed in the soups containing them. Macaroni, being tubular, is the favorite habitat of a very dangerous insect, which is rendered peculiarly ferocious by being boiled. The government of the island, therefore, never allows a stick of it to be exported

without being accompanied by a piston with which its cavity may at any time be thoroughly swept out. These are commonly lost or stolen before the macaroni arrives among us. It therefore always contains many of these insects, which, however, generally die of old age in the shops, so that accidents from this source are comparatively rare.

"The fruit of the bread-tree consists principally of hot rolls. The buttered-muffin variety is supposed to be a hybrid with the coconut-palm, the cream found on the milk of the coconut exuding from the hybrid in the shape of butter, just as the ripe fruit is splitting, so as to fit it for the tea-table, where it is commonly served up with cold——"

There—I don't want to read any more of it. You see that many of these statements are highly improbable. No, I shall not mention the paper.—"*The Autocrat of the Breakfast-Table.*"

Music-Pounding

THE old Master was talking about a concert he had been to hear.

—I don't like your chopped music anyway. That woman—she had more sense in her little finger than forty medical societies—Florence Nightingale—says that the music you *pour* out is good for sick folks, and the music you *pound* out isn't. Not that exactly, but something like it. I have been to hear some music-pounding. It was a young woman, with as many white muslin flounces round her as the planet Saturn has rings, that did it. She gave the music-stool a twirl or two and fluffed down on to it like a whirl of soap-suds in a hand-basin. Then she pushed up her cuffs as if she was going to fight for the

champion's belt. Then she worked her wrists and her hands, to limber 'em, I suppose, and spread out her fingers till they looked as though they would pretty much cover the keyboard, from the growling end to the little squeaky one. Then those two hands of hers made a jump at the keys as if they were a couple of tigers coming down on a flock of black-and-white sheep, and the piano gave a great howl as if its tail had been trod on. Dead stop—so still you could hear your hair growing. Then another jump, and another howl, as if the piano had two tails and you had trod on both of 'em at once, and then a grand clatter and scramble and string of jumps, up and down, back and forward, one hand over the other, like a stampede of rats and mice more than like anything I call music. I like to hear a woman sing, and I like to hear a fiddle sing, but these noises they hammer out of their wood-and-ivory anvils—don't talk to me; I know the difference between a bullfrog and a wood-thrush.—"*The Poet at the Breakfast-Table.*"

Dislikes

I WANT it to be understood that I consider that a certain number of persons are at liberty to dislike me peremptorily, without showing cause, and that they give no offense whatever in so doing.

If I did not cheerfully acquiesce in this sentiment toward myself on the part of others, I should not feel at liberty to indulge my own aversions. I try to cultivate a Christian feeling to all my fellow-creatures, but inasmuch as I must also respect truth and honesty, I confess to myself a certain number of inalienable dislikes and prejudices, some of which may possibly be shared by others. Some of these are purely instinctive; for

others I can assign a reason. Our likes and dislikes play so important a part in the order of things that it is well to see on what they are founded.

There are persons I meet occasionally who are too intelligent by half for my liking. They know my thoughts beforehand, and tell me what I was going to say. Of course they are masters of all my knowledge, and a good deal besides; have read all the books I have read, and in later editions; have had all the experiences I have been through, and more, too. In my private opinion, every mother's son of them will lie at any time rather than confess ignorance.

I have a kind of dread, rather than hatred, of persons with a large excess of vitality—great feeders, great laughers, great story-tellers, who come sweeping over their company with a huge tidal-wave of animal spirits and boisterous merriment. I have pretty good spirits myself, and enjoy a little mild pleasantry, but I am oppressed and extinguished by these great lusty, noisy creatures, and feel as if I were a mute at a funeral when they get into full blast.

I cannot get along much better with those drooping, languid people, whose vitality falls short as much as that of the others is in excess. I have not life enough for two; I wish I had. It is not very enlivening to meet a fellow-creature whose expression and accents say, "You are the hair that breaks the camel's back of my endurance; you are the last drop that makes my cup of woe run over"; persons whose heads drop on one side like those of toothless infants; whose voices recall the tones in which our old snuffling choir used to wail out the verse of

"Life is the time to serve the Lord."

There is another style which does not captivate me. I recognize an attempt at the *grand manner* now and then, in persons

who are well enough in their way, but of no particular importance, socially or otherwise. Some family tradition of wealth or distinction is apt to be at the bottom of it, and it survives all the advantages that used to set it off. I like family pride as well as my neighbors, and respect the high-born fellow-citizen whose progenitors have not worked in their shirt-sleeves for the last two generations full as much as I ought to. But *grandpère oblige;* a person with a known grandfather is too distinguished to find it necessary to put on airs. The few Royal Princes I have happened to know were very easy people to get along with, and had not half the social knee-action I have often seen in the collapsed dowagers who lifted their eyebrows at me in my earlier years.

My heart does not warm as it should do toward the persons, not intimates, who are always *too* glad to see me when we meet by accident, and discover all at once that they have a vast deal to unbosom themselves to me.

There is one blameless person whom I cannot love and have no excuse for hating. It is the innocent fellow-creature, otherwise inoffensive to me, whom I find I have involuntarily joined on turning a corner. I suppose the Mississippi, which was flowing quietly along, minding its own business, hates the Missouri for coming into it all at once with its muddy stream. I suppose the Missouri in like manner hates the Mississippi for diluting with its limpid but insipid current the rich reminiscences of the varied soils through which its own stream has wandered. I will not compare myself to the clear or the turbid current, but I will own that my heart sinks when I find all of a sudden I am in for a corner confluence, and I cease loving my neighbor as myself until I can get away from him.

—*"The Poet at the Breakfast-Table."*

The Deacon's Masterpiece;

Or, the Wonderful "One-hoss Shay"

A Logical Story

HAVE you heard of the wonderful one-hoss shay
That was built in such a logical way,
It ran a hundred years to a day,
And then, of a sudden, it—ah, but stay,
I'll tell you what happened without delay,
Scaring the parson into fits,
Frightening people out of their wits—
Have you ever heard of that, I say?

Seventeen hundred and fifty-five.
Georgius Secundus was then alive—
Snuffy old drone from the German hive.
That was the year when Lisbon-town
Saw the earth open and gulp her down,
And Braddock's army was done so brown,
Left without a scalp to its crown.
It was on the terrible Earthquake day
That the Deacon finished the one-hoss shay.

Now in building of chaises, I tell you what,
There is always *somewhere* a weakest spot—
In hub, tire, felloe, in spring or thill,
In panel, or cross-bar, or floor, or sill,
In screw, bolt, thoroughbrace—lurking still,
Find it somewhere you must and will—

Oliver Wendell Holmes

Above or below, or within or without—
And that's the reason, beyond a doubt,
That a chaise *breaks down*, but doesn't *wear out*.

But the Deacon swore (as deacons do,
With an "I dew vum," or an "I tell *yeou*")
He would build one shay to beat the taown
'N' the keounty, 'n' all the kentry raoun';
It should be so built that it *couldn'* break daown:
—"Fur," said the Deacon, "'t's mighty plain
Thut the weakes' place mus' stan' the strain;
'N' the way t' fix it, uz I maintain,
Is only jest
T' make that place uz strong uz the rest."

So the Deacon inquired of the village folk
Where he could find the strongest oak,
That couldn't be split nor bent nor broke—
That was for spokes and floor and sills;
He sent for lancewood to make the thills;
The cross-bars were ash, from the straightest trees,
The panels of whitewood, that cuts like cheese,
But lasts like iron for things like these;
The hubs of logs from the "Settler's ellum"—
Last of its timber—they couldn't sell 'em,
Never an ax had seen their chips,
And the wedges flew from between their lips,
Their blunt ends frizzled like celery-tips;
Step and prop-iron, bolt and screw,
Spring, tire, axle, and linchpin, too,
Steel of the finest, bright and blue;

Thoroughbrace bison-skin, thick and wide;
Boot, top, dasher, from tough old hide
Found in the pit when the tanner died.
That was the way he "put her through"—
"There!" said the Deacon, "naow she'll dew!"

Do! I tell you, I rather guess
She was a wonder and nothing less!
Colts grew horses, beards turned gray,
Deacon and Deaconess dropped away,
Children and grandchildren—where were they?
But there stood the stout old one-hoss shay
As fresh as on Lisbon-earthquake day!

EIGHTEEN HUNDRED—it came and found
The Deacon's masterpiece strong and sound.
Eighteen hundred increased by ten—
"Hahnsum kerridge" they called it then.
Eighteen hundred and twenty came—
Running as usual; much the same.
Thirty and forty at last arrived,
And then come fifty, and FIFTY-FIVE.

Little of all we value here
Wakes on the morn of its hundredth year
Without both feeling and looking queer.
In fact, there's nothing that keeps its youth,
So far as I know, but a tree and truth.
(This is a moral that runs at large;
Take it—You're welcome—No extra charge.)

FIRST OF NOVEMBER—the Earthquake-day—
There are traces of age in the one-hoss shay,

Oliver Wendell Holmes

A general flavor of mild decay,
But nothing local, as one may say.
There couldn't be—for the Deacon's art
Had made it so like in every part
That there wasn't a chance for one to start.
For the wheels were just as strong as the thills,
And the floor was just as strong as the sills,
And the panels just as strong as the floor,
And the whipple-tree neither less nor more,
And the back cross-bar as strong as the fore,
And spring and axle and hub *encore*.
And yet, *as a whole*, it is past a doubt
In another hour it will be *worn out!*

First of November, 'Fifty-five!
This morning the parson takes a drive.
Now, small boys, get out of the way!
Here comes the wonderful one-hoss shay,
Drawn by a rat-tailed, ewe-necked bay.
"Huddup!" said the parson—Off went they.
The parson was working his Sunday's text—
Had got to *fifthly*, and stopped perplexed
At what the—Moses—was coming next.

All at once the horse stood still,
Close by the meet'n'-house on the hill.
—First a shiver, and then a thrill,
Then something decidedly like a spill—
And the parson was sitting upon a rock,
At half-past nine by the meet'n'-house clock—
Just the hour of the Earthquake shock!
—What do you think the parson found,
When he got up and stared around?

The poor old chaise in a heap or mound,
As if it had been to the mill and ground!
You see, of course, if you're not a dunce,
How it went to pieces all at once—
All at once, and nothing first—
Just as bubbles do when they burst.

End of the wonderful one-hoss shay.
Logic is logic. That's all I say.

My Aunt

My aunt! my dear unmarried aunt!
  Long years have o'er her flown;
Yet still she strains the aching clasp
  That binds her virgin zone;
I know it hurts her—though she looks
  As cheerful as she can;
Her waist is ampler than her life,
  For life is but a span.

My aunt, my poor deluded aunt!
  Her hair is almost gray;
Why will she train that winter curl
  In such a spring-like way?
How can she lay her glasses down,
  And say she reads as well,
When, through a double convex lens,
  She just makes out to spell?

Oliver Wendell Holmes

Her father—grandpapa! forgive
  This erring lip its smiles—
Vowed she would make the finest girl
  Within a hundred miles.
He sent her to a stylish school;
  'Twas in her thirteenth June;
And with her, as the rules required,
  "Two towels and a spoon."

They braced my aunt against a board,
  To make her straight and tall;
They laced her up, they starved her down,
  To make her light and small;
They pinched her feet, they singed her hair,
  They screwed it up with pins—
Oh, never mortal suffered more
  In penance for her sins.

So, when my precious aunt was done,
  My grandsire brought her back
(By daylight, lest some rabid youth
  Might follow on the track);
"Ah!" said my grandsire, as he shook
  Some powder in his pan,
"What could this lovely creature do
  Against a desperate man!"

Alas! nor chariot nor barouche
  Nor bandit cavalcade
Tore from the trembling father's arms
  His all-accomplished maid.

For her how happy had it been!
And Heaven had spared to me
To see one sad, ungathered rose
On my ancestral tree.

The Ballad of the Oysterman

It was a tall young oysterman lived by the riverside,
His shop was just upon the bank, his boat was on the tide;
The daughter of a fisherman, that was so straight and slim,
Lived over on the other bank, right opposite to him.

It was the pensive oysterman that saw a lovely maid,
Upon a moonlight evening, a-sitting in the shade;
He saw her wave a handkerchief, as much as if to say,
"I'm wide awake, young oysterman, and all the folks away."

Then up arose the oysterman, and to himself said he,
"I guess I'll leave the skiff at home, for fear that folks should see;
I read it in the story-book, that, for to kiss his dear,
Leander swam the Hellespont, and I will swim this here."

And he has leaped into the waves, and crossed the shining stream,
And he has clambered up the bank, all in the moonlight gleam;
Oh, there are kisses sweet as dew, and words as soft as rain—
But they have heard her father's step, and in he leaps again!

Out spoke the ancient fisherman: "Oh, what was that, my daughter?"
"'Twas nothing but a pebble, sir, I threw into the water."

Oliver Wendell Holmes

"And what is that, pray tell me, love, that paddles off so fast?"
"It's nothing but a porpoise, sir, that's been a-swimming past."

Out spoke the ancient fisherman: "Now, bring me my harpoon!
I'll get into my fishing-boat, and fix the fellow soon."
Down fell that pretty innocent, as falls a snow-white lamb;
Her hair drooped round her pallid cheeks, like seaweed on a clam.

Alas! for those two loving ones! she waked not from her swound,
And he was taken with the cramp, and in the waves was drowned;
But Fate has metamorphosed them, in pity of their woe,
And now they keep an oyster shop for mermaids down below.

The Height of the Ridiculous

I WROTE some lines once on a time,
In wondrous merry mood,
And thought, as usual, men would say
They were exceeding good.

They were so queer, so very queer,
I laughed as I would die;
Albeit, in the general way,
A sober man am I.

I called my servant, and he came;
  How kind it was of him,
To mind a slender man like me,
  He of the mighty limb!

"These to the printer," I exclaimed,
  And, in my humorous way,
I added (as a trifling jest),
  "There'll be the devil to pay."

He took the paper, and I watched,
  And saw him peep within;
At the first line he read, his face
  Was all upon the grin.

He read the next: the grin grew broad,
  And shot from ear to ear;
He read the third: a chuckling noise
  I now began to hear.

The fourth: he broke into a roar;
  The fifth: his waistband split;
The sixth: he burst five buttons off,
  And tumbled in a fit.

Ten days and nights, with sleepless eye,
  I watched that wretched man,
And since, I never dare to write
  As funny as I can.

Oliver Wendell Holmes

A Walk with the Schoolmistress

I CAN'T say just how many walks she and I had taken together before this one. I found the effect of going out every morning was decidedly favorable on her health. Two pleasing dimples, the places for which were just marked when she came, played, shadowy, in her freshening cheeks when she smiled and nodded good morning to me from the schoolhouse steps.

I am afraid I did the greater part of the talking. At any rate, if I should try to report all that I said during the first half-dozen walks we took together, I fear that I might receive a gentle hint from my friends the publishers, that a separate volume, at my own risk and expense, would be the proper method of bringing them before the public.

——I would have a woman as true as Death. At the first real lie which works from the heart outward, she should be tenderly chloroformed into a better world, where she can have an angel for a governess, and feed on strange fruits which will make her all over again, even to her bones and marrow.—Whether gifted with the accident of beauty or not, she should have been molded in the rose-red clay of Love, before the breath of life made a moving mortal of her. Love-capacity is a congenital endowment; and I think, after a while, one gets to know the warm-hued natures it belongs to from the pretty pipe-clay counterfeits of it.—Proud she may be, in the sense of respecting herself; but pride, in the sense of contemning others less gifted than herself, deserves the two lowest circles of a vulgar woman's Inferno, where the punishments are Smallpox and Bankruptcy. —She who nips off the end of a brittle courtesy, as one breaks the tip of an icicle, to bestow upon those whom she ought cor-

dially and kindly to recognize, proclaims the fact that she comes not merely of low blood, but of bad blood. Consciousness of unquestioned position makes people gracious in proper measure to all; but if a woman puts on airs with her real equals, she has something about herself or her family she is ashamed of, or ought to be. Middle, and more than middle-aged people, who know family histories, generally see through it. An official of standing was rude to me once. Oh, that is the maternal grandfather, —said a wise old friend to me,—he was a boor.—Better too few words, from the woman we love, than too many: while she is silent, Nature is working for her; while she talks, she is working for herself.—Love is sparingly soluble in the words of men; therefore they speak much of it; but one syllable of woman's speech can dissolve more of it than a man's heart can hold.

——Whether I said any or all of these things to the schoolmistress, or not,—whether I stole them out of Lord Bacon,—whether I cribbed them from Balzac,—whether I dipped them from the ocean of Tupperian wisdom,—or whether I have just found them in my head, laid there by that solemn fowl, Experience, (who, according to my observation, cackles oftener than she drops real live eggs,) I cannot say. Wise men have said more foolish things,—and foolish men, I don't doubt, have said as wise things. Anyhow, the schoolmistress and I had pleasant walks and long talks, all of which I do not feel bound to report.

——You are a stranger to me, Ma'am.—I don't doubt you would like to know all I said to the schoolmistress.—I sh'an't do it;—I had rather get the publishers to return the money you have invested in this. Besides, I have forgotten a good deal of it. I shall tell only what I like of what I remember.

——My idea was, in the first place, to search out the picturesque spots which the city affords a sight of, to those who have eyes. I know a good many, and it was a pleasure to look

at them in company with my young friend. There were the shrubs and flowers in the Franklin-Place front-yards or borders; Commerce is just putting his granite foot upon them. Then there are certain small seraglio-gardens, into which one can get a peep through the crevices of high fences,—one in Myrtle Street, or backing on it,—here and there one at the North and South Ends. Then the great elms in Essex Street. Then the stately horse-chestnuts in that vacant lot in Chambers Street, which hold their outspread hands over your head, (as I said in my poem the other day,) and look as if they were whispering, "May grace, mercy, and peace be with you!"—and the rest of that benediction. Nay, there are certain patches of ground, which, having lain neglected for a time, Nature, who always has her pockets full of seeds, and holes in all her pockets, has covered with hungry plebeian growths, which fight for life with each other, until some of them get broad-leaved and succulent, and you have a coarse vegetable tapestry which Raphael would not have disdained to spread over the foreground of his masterpiece. The Professor pretends that he found such a one in Charles Street, which, in its dare-devil impudence of rough-and-tumble vegetation, beat the pretty-behaved flower-beds of the Public Garden as ignominiously as a group of young tatterdemalions playing pitch-and-toss beats a row of Sunday-school boys with their teacher at their head.

But then the Professor has one of his burrows in that region, and puts everything in high colors relating to it. That is his way about everything.——I hold any man cheap,—he said,—of whom nothing stronger can be uttered than that all his geese are swans.——How is that, Professor?—said I;—I should have set you down for one of that sort.——Sir,—said he,—I am proud to say, that Nature has so far enriched me, that I cannot own so much as a *duck* without seeing in it as pretty a swan as ever

swam the basin in the garden of Luxembourg. And the Professor showed the whites of his eyes devoutly, like one returning thanks after a dinner of many courses.

I don't know anything sweeter than this leaking in of Nature through all the cracks in the walls and floors of cities. You heap up a million tons of hewn rocks on a square mile or two of earth which was green once. The trees look down from the hillsides and ask each other, as they stand on tiptoe,—"What are these people about?" And the small herbs at their feet look up and whisper back,—"We will go and see." So the small herbs pack themselves up in the least possible bundles, and wait until the wind steals to them at night and whispers,—"Come with me." Then they go softly with it into the great city,—one to a cleft in the pavement, one to a spout on the roof, one to a seam in the marbles over a rich gentleman's bones, and one to the grave without a stone where nothing but a man is buried,—and there they grow, looking down on the generations of men from moldy roofs, looking up from between the less-trodden pavements, looking out through iron cemetery-railings. Listen to them, when there is only a light breath stirring, and you will hear them saying to each other,—"Wait awhile!" The words run along the telegraph of those narrow green lines that border the roads leading from the city, until they reach the slope of the hills, and the trees repeat in low murmurs to each other,—"Wait awhile!" By and by the flow of life in the street ebbs, and the old leafy inhabitants—the smaller tribes always in front—saunter in, one by one, very careless seemingly, but very tenacious, until they swarm so that the great stones gape from each other with the crowding of their roots, and the feldspar begins to be picked out of the granite to find them food. At last the trees take up their solemn line of march, and never rest until they have encamped in the market-place. Wait long

enough and you will find an old doting oak hugging a huge worn block in its yellow underground arms; that was the corner-stone of the State-House. Oh, so patient she is, this imperturbable Nature.

——Let us cry!——

But all this has nothing to do with my walks and talks with the schoolmistress. I did not say that I would not tell you something about them. Let me alone, and I shall talk to you more than I ought to, probably. We never tell our secrets to people that pump for them.

Books we talked about, and education. It was her duty to know something of these, and of course she did. Perhaps I was somewhat more learned than she, but I found that the difference between her reading and mine was like that of a man's and a woman's dusting a library. The man flaps about with a bunch of feathers; the woman goes to work softly with a cloth. She does not raise half the dust, nor fill her own eyes and mouth with it,—but she goes into all the corners, and attends to the leaves as much as the covers.—Books are the *negative* pictures of thought, and the more sensitive the mind that receives their images, the more nicely the finest lines are reproduced. A woman, (of the right kind,) reading after a man, follows him as Ruth followed the reapers of Boaz, and her gleanings are often the finest of the wheat.

But it was in talking of Life that we came most nearly together. I thought I knew something about that,—that I could speak or write about it somewhat to the purpose.

To take up this fluid earthly being of ours as a sponge sucks up water,—to be steeped and soaked in its realities as a hide fills its pores lying seven years in a tan-pit,—to have winnowed every wave of it as a mill-wheel works up the stream that runs through the flume upon its float-boards,—to have curled up in the keen-

est spasms and flattened out in the laxest languors of this breathing-sickness, which keeps certain parcels of matter uneasy for three or four score years,—to have fought all the devils and clasped all the angels of its delirium,—and then, just at the point when the white-hot passions have cooled down to a cherry-red, plunge our experience into the ice-cold stream of some human language or other, one might think would end in a rhapsody with something of spring and temper in it. All this I thought my power and province.

The schoolmistress had tried life, too. Once in a while one meets with a single soul greater than all the living pageant that passes before it. As the pale astronomer sits in his study with sunken eyes and thin fingers, and weighs Uranus or Neptune as in a balance, so there are meek, slight women who have weighed all that this planetary life can offer, and hold it like a bauble in the palm of their slender hands. This was one of them. Fortune had left her, sorrow had baptized her; the routine of labor and the loneliness of almost friendless city-life were before her. Yet, as I looked upon her tranquil face, gradually regaining a cheerfulness that was often sprightly, as she became interested in the various matters we talked about and places we visited, I saw that eye and lip and every shifting lineament were made for love,—unconscious of their sweet office as yet, and meeting the cold aspect of Duty with the natural graces which were meant for the reward of nothing less than the Great Passion.

——I never spoke one word of love to the schoolmistress in the course of these pleasant walks. It seemed to me that we talked of everything but love on that particular morning. There was, perhaps, a little more timidity and hesitancy on my part than I have commonly shown among our people at the boarding-house. In fact, I considered myself the master at the break-

fast-table; but, somehow, I could not command myself just then so well as usual. The truth is, I had secured a passage to Liverpool in the steamer which was to leave at noon,—with the condition, however, of being released in case circumstances occurred to detain me. The schoolmistress knew nothing about all this, of course, as yet.

It was on the Common that we were walking. The *mall*, or boulevard of our Common, you know, has various branches leading from it in different directions. One of these runs downward from opposite Joy Street southward across the whole length of the Common to Boylston Street. We called it the long path, and were fond of it.

I felt very weak indeed (though of a tolerably robust habit) as we came opposite the head of this path on that morning. I think I tried to speak twice without making myself distinctly audible. At last I got out the question,——will you take the long path with me?——Certainly,—said the schoolmistress,—with much pleasure.——Think,—I said,—before you answer; if you take the long path with me now, I shall interpret it that we are to part no more!——The schoolmistress stepped back with a sudden movement, as if an arrow had struck her.

One of the long granite blocks used as seats was hard by,—the one you may still see close by the Gingko-tree.——Pray, sit down,—I said.——No, no,—she answered, softly,—I will walk the *long path* with you!

——The old gentleman who sits opposite met us walking, arm in arm, about the middle of the long path, and said, very charmingly,—"Good morning, my dears!"

—*"Autocrat of the Breakfast-Table."*

Harriet Beecher Stowe

The Minister's Wooing

"WAL, the upshot on't was, they fussed and fuzzled and wuzzled till they'd drinked up all the tea in the teapot; and then they went down and called on the parson, and wuzzled him all up talkin' about this, that, and t'other that wanted lookin' to, and that it was no way to leave everything to a young chit like Huldy, and that he ought to be lookin' about for an experienced woman.

"The parson, he thanked 'em kindly, and said he believed their motives was good, but he didn't go no further.

"He didn't ask Mis' Pipperidge to come and stay there and help him, nor nothin' o' that kind; but he said he'd attend to matters himself. The fact was, the parson had got such a likin' for havin' Huldy 'round that he couldn't think o' such a thing as swappin' her off for the Widder Pipperidge.

"'But,' he thought to himself, 'Huldy is a good girl; but I oughtn't to be a-leavin' everything to her—it's too hard on her. I ought to be instructin' and guidin' and helpin' of her; 'cause 'tain't everybody could be expected to know and do what Mis' Carryl did;' and so at it he went; and Lordy massy! didn't Huldy hev a time on't when the minister began to come out of his study and wanted to ten' 'round an' see to things? Huldy, you see, thought all the world of the minister, and she was 'most afraid to laugh; but she told me she couldn't, for the life of her, help it when his back was turned, for he wuzzled things up in the most singular way. But Huldy, she'd jest say, 'Yes, sir,' and get him off into his study, and go on her own way.

"'Huldy,' says the minister one day, 'you ain't experienced outdoors; and when you want to know anything you must come to me.'

"'Yes, sir,' said Huldy.

"'Now, Huldy,' says the parson, 'you must be sure to save the turkey eggs, so that we can have a lot of turkeys for Thanksgiving.'

"'Yes, sir,' says Huldy; and she opened the pantry door and showed him a nice dishful she'd been a-savin' up. Wal, the very next day the parson's hen-turkey was found killed up to old Jim Scroggs's barn. Folks say Scroggs killed it, though Scroggs, he stood to it he didn't; at any rate, the Scroggses they made a meal on't, and Huldy, she felt bad about it 'cause she'd set her heart on raisin' the turkeys; and says she, 'Oh, dear! I don't know what I shall do. I was just ready to set her.'

"'Do, Huldy?' says the parson: 'why, there's the other turkey, out there by the door; and a fine bird, too, he is.'

"Sure enough, there was the old tom-turkey a-struttin' and a-sidlin' and a-quitterin', and a-floutin' his tail feathers in the sun, like a lively young widower all ready to begin life over again.

"'But,' says Huldy, 'you know *he* can't set on eggs.'

"'He can't? I'd like to know why?' says the parson. 'He *shall* set on eggs, and hatch 'em, too.'

"'Oh, doctor!' says Huldy, all in a tremble; 'cause, you know, she didn't want to contradict the minister, and she was afraid she should laugh—'I never heard that a tom-turkey would set on eggs.'

"'Why, they ought to,' said the parson, getting quite 'arnest. 'What else be they good for? You just bring out the eggs, now, and put 'em in the nest, and I'll make him set on 'em.'

"So Huldy, she thought there weren't no way to convince

him but to let him try: so she took the eggs out and fixed 'em all nice in the nest; and then she come back and found old Tom a-skirmishin' with the parson pretty lively, I tell ye. Ye see, old Tom, he didn't take the idea at all; and he flopped and gobbled, and fit the parson: and the parson's wig got 'round so that his cue stuck straight out over his ear, but he'd got his blood up. Ye see, the old doctor was used to carryin' his p'ints o' doctrine; and he hadn't fit the Arminians and Socinians to be beat by a tom-turkey; and finally he made a dive and ketched him by the neck in spite o' his floppin', and stroked him down, and put Huldy's apron 'round him.

"'There, Huldy,' he says, quite red in the face, 'we've got him now;' and he traveled off to the barn with him as lively as a cricket.

"Huldy came behind, just chokin' with laugh, and afraid the minister would look 'round and see her.

"'Now, Huldy, we'll crook his legs and set him down,' says the parson, when they got him to the nest; 'you see, he is getting quiet, and he'll set there all right.'

"And the parson, he sot him down; and old Tom, he sot there solemn enough and held his head down all droopin', lookin' like a rail pious old cock as long as the parson sot by him.

"'There; you see how still he sets,' says the parson to Huldy.

"Huldy was 'most dyin' for fear she should laugh. 'I'm afraid he'll get up,' says she, 'when you do.'

"'Oh, no, he won't!' says the parson, quite confident. 'There, there,' says he, layin' his hands on him as if pronouncin' a blessin'.

"But when the parson riz up, old Tom, he riz up, too, and began to march over the eggs.

"'Stop, now!' says the parson. 'I'll make him get down agin; hand me that corn-basket; we'll put that over him.'

"So he crooked old Tom's legs and got him down agin; and they put the corn-basket over him, and then they both stood and waited.

"'That'll do the thing, Huldy,' said the parson.

"'I don't know about it,' says Huldy.

"'Oh, yes, it will, child; I understand,' says he.

"Just as he spoke, the basket riz right up and stood, and they could see old Tom's long legs.

"'I'll make him stay down, confound him,' says the parson, for you see, parsons is men, like the rest on us, and the doctor had got his spunk up.

"'You jist hold him a minute, and I'll get something that'll make him stay, I guess;' and out he went to the fence and brought in a long, thin, flat stone, and laid it on old Tom's back.

"'Oh, my eggs!' says Huldy. 'I'm afraid he's smashed 'em!'

"And sure enough, there they was, smashed flat enough under the stone.

"'I'll have him killed,' said the parson. 'We won't have such a critter 'round.'

"Wal, next week, Huldy, she jist borrowed the minister's horse and side-saddle and rode over to South Parish to her Aunt Bascome's—Widder Bascome's, you know, that lives there by the trout-brook—and got a lot o' turkey eggs o' her, and come back and set a hen on 'em, and said nothin'; and in good time there was as nice a lot o' turkey-chicks as ever ye see.

"Huldy never said a word to the minister about his experiment, and he never said a word to her; but he sort o' kep' more to his books, and didn't take it on him to advise so much.

"But not long arter he took it into his head that Huldy ought to have a pig to be a-fattin' with the buttermilk.

"Mis' Pipperidge set him up to it; and jist then old Tom Bigelow, out to Juniper Hill, told him if he'd call over he'd give him a little pig.

"So he sent for a man, and told him to build a pig-pen right out by the well, and have it all ready when he came home with his pig.

"Huldy said she wished he might put a curb round the well out there, because in the dark sometimes a body might stumble into it; and the parson said he might do that.

"Wal, old Aikin, the carpenter, he didn't come till 'most the middle of the afternoon; and then he sort o' idled, so that he didn't get up the well-curb till sundown; and then he went off, and said he'd come and do the pig-pen next day.

"Wal, arter dark, Parson Carryl, he driv into the yard, full chizel, with his pig.

"'There, Huldy, I've got you a nice little pig.'

"'Dear me!' says Huldy; 'where have you put him?'

"'Why, out there in the pig-pen, to be sure.'

"'Oh, dear me!' says Huldy, 'that's the well-curb—there ain't no pig-pen built,' says she.

"'Lordy massy!' says the parson; 'then I've thrown the pig in the well!'

"Wal, Huldy she worked and worked, and finally she fished piggy out in the bucket, but he was as dead as a door-nail; and she got him out o' the way quietly, and didn't say much; and the parson he took to a great Hebrew book in his study.

"Arter that the parson set sich store by Huldy that he come to her and asked her about everything, and it was amazin' how everything she put her hand to prospered. Huldy planted marigolds and larkspurs, pinks and carnations, all up and down

the path to the front door; and trained up mornin'-glories and scarlet runners round the windows. And she was always gettin' a root here, and a sprig there, and a seed from somebody else; for Huldy was one o' them that has the gift, so that ef you jist give 'em the leastest of anything they make a great bush out of it right away; so that in six months Huldy had roses and geraniums and lilies sich as it would take a gardener to raise.

"Huldy was so sort o' chipper and fair-spoken that she got the hired men all under her thumb: they come to her and took her orders jist as meek as so many calves, and she traded at the store, and kep' the accounts, and she had her eyes everywhere, and tied up all the ends so tight that there wa'n't no gettin' 'round her. She wouldn't let nobody put nothin' off on Parson Carryl 'cause he was a minister. Huldy was allers up to anybody that wanted to make a hard bargain, and afore he knew jist what he was about she'd got the best end of it, and everybody said that Huldy was the most capable girl they ever traded with.

"Wal, come to the meetin' of the Association, Mis' Deakin Blodgett and Mis' Pipperidge come callin' up to the parson's all in a stew and offerin' their services to get the house ready, but the doctor he jist thanked 'em quite quiet, and turned 'em over to Huldy; and Huldy she told 'em that she'd got everything ready, and showed 'em her pantries, and her cakes, and her pies, and her puddin's, and took 'em all over the house; and they went peekin' and pokin', openin' cupboard doors, and lookin' into drawers; and they couldn't find so much as a thread out o' the way, from garret to cellar, and so they went off quite discontented. Arter that the women set a new trouble a-brewin'. They begun to talk that it was a year now since Mis' Carryl died; and it railly wasn't proper such a young gal

to be stayin' there, who everybody could see was a-settin' her cap for the minister.

"Mis' Pipperidge said, that so long as she looked on Huldy as the hired gal she hadn't thought much about it; but Huldy was railly takin' on airs as an equal, and appearin' as mistress o' the house in a way that would make talk if it went on. And Mis' Pipperidge she driv 'round up to Deakin Abner Snow's, and down to Mis' 'Lijah Perry's, and asked them if they wasn't afraid that the way the parson and Huldy was a-goin' on might make talk. And they said they hadn't thought on't before, but now, come to think on't, they was sure it would; and they all went and talked with somebody else and asked them if they didn't think it would make talk. So come Sunday, between meetin's there warn't nothin' else talked about; and Huldy saw folks a-noddin' and a-winkin', and a-lookin' arter her, and she begun to feel dreffful sort o' disagreeable. Finally Mis' Sawin, she says to her, 'My dear, didn't you never think folk would talk about you and the minister?'

"'No; why should they?' says Huldy, quite innocent.

"'Wal, dear,' says she, 'I think it's a shame; but they say you're tryin' to catch him, and that it's so bold and improper for you to be courtin' of him right in his own house—you know folks will talk—I thought I'd tell you, 'cause I think so much of you,' says she.

"Huldy was a gal of spirit, and she despised the talk, but it made her dreffful uncomfortable; and when she got home at night she sat down in the mornin'-glory porch, quite quiet, and didn't sing a word.

"The minister he had heard the same thing from one of his deakins that day; and when he saw Huldy so kind o' silent, he says to her, 'Why don't you sing, my child?'

"He had a pleasant sort o' way with him, the minister had,

and Huldy had got to likin' to be with him; and it all come over her that perhaps she ought to go away; and her throat kind o' filled up so she couldn't hardly speak; and, says she, 'I can't sing to-night.'

"Says he, 'You don't know how much good your singin' has done me, nor how much good you have done me in all ways, Huldy. I wish I knew how to show my gratitude.'

"'Oh, sir!' says Huldy, '*is* it improper for me to be here?'

"'No, dear,' says the minister, 'but ill-natured folks will talk; but there is one way we can stop it, Huldy—if you'll marry me. You'll make me very happy, and I'll do all I can to make you happy. Will you?'

"Wal, Huldy never told me just what she said to the minister; gals never does give you the particulars of them 'are things jist as you'd like 'em—only I know the upshot and the hull on't was, that Huldy she did a considerable lot o' clear starchin' and ironin' the next two days, and the Friday o' next week the minister and she rode over together to Dr. Lothrop's, in Oldtown, and the doctor he jist made 'em man and wife."

William Tappan Thompson

A Proposal

PINEVILLE, *December 27* ——.

TO MR. THOMPSON:—*Dear Sir*—Crismus is over, and the thing is done did! You know I told you in my last letter I was gwine to bring Miss Mary up to the chalk on Crismus. Well, I done it, slick as a whistle, though it come mighty nigh bein a serious bisness. But I'll tell you all about the whole circumstance.

The fact is, I's made my mind up more'n twenty times to jest go and come right out with the whole bisness; but whenever I got whar she was, and whenever she looked at me with her witchin eyes, and kind o' blushed at me, I always felt sort o' skeered and fainty, and all what I made up to tell her was forgot, so I couldn't think of it to save me. But you's a married man, Mr. Thompson, so I couldn't tell you nothin about popin the question, as they call it. It's a mighty grate favour to ax of a pretty gall, and to people what aint used to it, it goes monstrous hard, don't it? They say widders don't mind it no more'n nothin. But I'm makin a transgression, as the preacher ses.

Crismus eve I put on my new suit, and shaved my face as slick as a smoothin iron, and after tea went over to old Miss Stallinses. As soon as I went into the parler whar they was all settin round the fire, Miss Carline and Miss Kesiah both laughed right out.

"There! there!" ses they, "I told you so. I know'd it would be Joseph."

"What's I done, Miss Carline?" ses I.

"You come under little sister's chicken bone, and I do believe she know'd you was comin when she put it over the dore."

"No I didn't—I didn't no such thing, now," ses Miss Mary, and her face blushed red all over.

"Oh, you needn't deny it," ses Miss Kesiah, "you belong to Joseph now, jest as sure as ther's any charm in chicken bones."

I know'd that was a first rate chance to say something, but the dear little creeter looked so sorry and kep blushin so, I couldn't say nothin zactly to the pint! so I tuck a chair and reached up and tuck down the bone and put it in my pocket.

"What are you gwine to do with that old chicken bone now, Majer?" ses Miss Mary.

"I'm gwine to keep it as long as I live," ses I, "as a Crismus present from the handsomest gall in Georgia."

When I sed that, she blushed worse and worse.

"Aint you shamed, Majer?" ses she.

"Now you ought to give *her* a Crismus gift, Joseph, to keep all *her* life," sed Miss Carline.

"Ah," ses old Miss Stallins, "when I was a gall we used to hang up our stockins——"

"Why, mother!" ses all of 'em, "to say stockins right before——"

Then I felt a little streaked too, cause they was all blushin as hard as they could.

"Highty-tity!" ses the old lady—"what monstrous 'finement to be shore! I'd like to know what harm ther is in stockins. People now-a-days is gittin so mealy-mouthed they can't call nothin by its right name, and I don't see as they's any better than the old-time people was. When I was a gall like you, child, I use to hang up my stockins and git 'em full of presents."

The galls kep laughin and blushin.

"Never mind," ses Miss Mary, "Majer's got to give me a Crismus gift—won't you, Majer?"

"Oh, yes," ses I, "you know I promised you one."

"But I didn't mean *that*," ses she.

"I've got one for you, what I want you to keep all your life, but it would take a two-bushel bag to hold it," ses I.

"Oh, that's the kind," ses she.

"But will you promise to keep it as long as you live?" ses I.

"Certainly I will, Majer."

"—Monstrous 'finement now-a-days—old people don't know nothin about perliteness," said old Miss Stallins, jest gwine to sleep with her nittin in her lap.

"Now you hear that, Miss Carline," ses I. "She ses she'll keep it all her life."

"Yes, I will," ses Miss Mary—"but what is it?"

"Never mind," ses I, "you hang up a bag big enough to hold it and you'll find out what it is, when you see it in the mornin."

Miss Carline winked at Miss Kesiah, and then whispered to her—then they both laughed and looked at me as mischievous as they could. They 'spicioned something.

"You'll be shore to give it to me now, if I hang up a bag," ses Miss Mary.

"And promise to keep it," ses I.

"Well, I will, cause I know that you wouldn't give me nothin that wasn't worth keepin."

They all agreed they would hang up a bag for me to put Miss Mary's Crismus present in, on the back porch, and about ten o'clock I told 'em good evenin and went home.

I sot up till midnight, and when they was all gone to bed I went softly into the back gate, and went up to the porch, and thar, shore enough, was a great big meal-bag hangin to the

jice. It was monstrous unhandy to git to it, but I was termined not to back out. So I sot some chairs on top of a bench and got hold of the rope and let myself down into the bag; but jest as I was gittin in, it swung agin the chairs, and down they went with a terrible racket; but nobody didn't wake up but Miss Stallinses old cur dog, and here he come rippin and tearin through the yard like rath, and round and round he went tryin to find what was the matter. I scrooch'd down in the bag and didn't breathe louder nor a kitten, for fear he'd find me out, and after a while he quit barkin.

The wind begun to blow bominable cold, and the old bag kep turnin round and swingin so it made me sea-sick as the mischief. I was afraid to move for fear the rope would break and let me fall, and thar I sot with my teeth rattlin like I had a ager. It seemed like it would never come daylight, and I do believe if I didn't love Miss Mary so powerful I would froze to death; for my heart was the only spot that felt warm, and it didn't beat more'n two licks a minit, only when I thought how she would be supprised in the mornin, and then it went in a canter. Bimeby the cussed old dog come up on the porch and begun to smell about the bag, and then he barked like he thought he'd treed something. "Bow! wow! wow!" ses he. Then he'd smell agin, and try to git up to the bag. "Git out!" ses I, very low, for fear the galls mought hear me. "Bow! wow!" ses he. "Be gone! you bominable fool," ses I, and I felt all over in spots, for I spected every minit he'd nip me, and what made it worse, I didn't know whar abouts he'd take hold. "Bow! wow! wow!" Then I tried coaxin—"Come here, good feller," ses I, and whistled a little to him, but it wasn't no use. Thar he stood and kep up his everlastin whinin and barkin all night. I couldn't tell when daylight was breakin, only by the chickens crowin, and I was monstrous glad to hear 'em, for if I'd had

to stay thar one hour more, I don't believe I'd ever got out of that bag alive.

Old Miss Stallins come out fust, and as soon as she seed the bag, ses she,

"What upon yeath has Joseph went and put in that bag for Mary? I'll lay it's a yearlin or some live animal, or Bruin wouldn't bark at it so."

She went in to call the galls, and I sot thar, shiverin all over so I couldn't hardly speak if I tried to—but I didn't say nothin. Bimeby they all come running out on the porch.

"My goodness! what is it?" ses Miss Mary.

"Oh, it's alive!" ses Miss Kesiah, "I seed it move."

"Call Cato, and make him cut the rope," ses Miss Carline, "and lets see what it is. Come here, Cato, and git this bag down."

"Don't hurt it for the world," ses Miss Mary.

Cato untied the rope that was round the jice, and let the bag down easy on the floor, and I tumbled out all covered with corn meal, from head to foot.

"Goodness gracious!" ses Miss Mary, "if it aint the Majer himself!"

"Yes," ses I, "and you know you promised to keep my Crismus present as long as you lived."

The galls laughed themselves almost to death, and went to brushin off the meal as fast as they could, sayin they was gwine to hang that bag up every Crismus till they got husbands too. Miss Mary—bless her bright eyes—she blushed as beautiful as a morning-glory, and sed she'd stick to her word. She was right out of bed, and her hair wasn't komed, and her dress wasn't fix'd at all, but the way she looked pretty was real distractin. I do believe if I was froze stiff, one look at her sweet face, as she stood thar lookin down to the floor with her

roguish eyes, and her bright curls fallin all over her snowy neck, would have fotched me too. I tell you what, it was worth hangin in a meal bag from one Crismus to another to feel as happy as I have ever sense.

I went home after we had the laugh out, and sot by the fire till I got thawed. In the forenoon all the Stallinses come over to our house and we had one of the greatest Crismus dinners that ever was seed in Georgia, and I don't believe a happier company ever sot down to the same table. Old Miss Stallins and mother settled the match, and talked over every thing that ever happened in ther families, and laughed at me and Mary, and cried about ther dead husbands, cause they wasn't alive to see ther children married.

It's all settled now, 'cept we haint sot the weddin day. I'd like to have it all over at once, but young galls always like to be engaged a while, you know, so I spose I must wait a month or so. Mary (she ses I mustn't call her Miss Mary now) has been a good deal of trouble and botheration to me; but if you could see her you wouldn't think I ought to grudge a little sufferin to git sich a sweet little wife.

You must come to the weddin if you possibly kin. I'll let you know when. No more from

Your friend, till death, JOS. JONES.

N. B. I like to forgot to tell you about cousin Pete. He got snapt on egnog when he heard of my ingagement, and he's been as meller as hoss-apple ever sense.

—*"Major Jones's Courtship."*

Practical Jokes

PINEVILLE, *February* 2.

TO MR. THOMPSON:—*Dear Sir*—Ever sense I writ my last letter to you, things is gone on jest as straight as a shingle, and the only thing what troubles me is, I'm fraid it's all too good to last. It's always been the way with me ever sense I can remember whenever I'm the happiest some cussed thing seems to turn up jest to upset all my calculations; and now, though the day is sot for the weddin, and the Stallinses is gettin every thing ready as fast as they can, I wouldn't be surprised much if some bominable thing was to happen, some yeathquake or something, jest to bust it all up agin, though I should hate it monstrous.

Old Miss Stallins read that piece in the Miscellany about the mistake in parson Miller's figers, and I do blieve she's as glad about it as if she was shore she would live a whole thousand years more herself. She ses she hain't got no objections to the weddin now, for me and Mary'll have plenty of time to make a fortin for our children and rais 'em up as they ought to be. She ses she always wondered how Mr. Miller could cifer the thing out so straight, to the very day, without a single mistake, but now he's made sich a terrible blunder of a whole thousand years, she ses she knows he aint no smarter nor other people, if he was raised at the North.

It's really surprisin how mazin poplar it does make a body to be engaged to be married to a butiful young lady. Sense the thing's leaked out, everybody's my pertickeler friend, and I can't meet nobody wherever I go, but what wants to congratilate me on my good fortin, 'cept cousin Pete and two or three other

fellers, who look sort o' like they wanted to laugh and couldn't. Almost every night Mary and me is invited to a party. Tother night we went to one to old Squire Rogerses, whar I got my dander up a little the worst I've had it for some time. I don't blieve you have ever hearn of jest sich a dingd fool trick as they played on me. Ther was a good many young people thar, and as the Squire don't allow dancin, they all played games and tricks, and sich foolishness to pass away the time, which to my notion is a bominable sight worse than dancin.

Cousin Pete was thar splurgin about in the biggest, with his dandy-cut trowsers and big whiskers, and tried to take the shine off everybody else, jest as he always does. Well, bimeby he ses,

"Spose we play brother Bob—let's play brother Bob."

"Yes, let's play that," ses all of 'em, "won't you be brother Bob, Majer?"

"Who's brother Bob?" ses I—for I didn't know nothin about it, and that's the way I come to be so bominably tuck in.

"I'll tell you," ses he, "you and somebody else must set down in the chairs and be blindfolded, and the rest must all walk round and round you, and keep tappin you on the head with something till you guess who bob'd you."

"But how bob me?" ses I.

"Why," ses he, "when any one taps you, you must say, 'Brother, I'm bob'd!' and then they'll ax, 'Who bob'd you?' and if you guess the right one, then they must take your place and be bob'd till they guess who bob'd 'em. If you'll be blindfolded I will," ses he, "jest for fun."

"Well," ses I, "anything for fun."

Cousin Pete sot out two chairs into the middle of the room, back to back, and we sot down, and they tied a hankercher round my eyes tite as the mischief, so I couldn't see to guess no

more'n if I had no eyes at all. Then the boys and galls commenced walkin round us in a circle all giglin and laughin.

I hadn't sot thar no time before cawhalux! some one tuck me right side of the head with a dratted big book. The fire flew out o' my eyes in big live coals, and I like to keeled over out of the chair. I felt my blood risin like a mill-tail, but they all laughed mightily at the fun, and after a while ses I,

"Brother, I'm bob'd."

"Who bob'd you?" ses they.

I guessed the biggest fisted feller in the room, but it wasn't him.

"No, no!" they all hollered, and round they went agin a-rompin and laughin and enjoyin the fun all to themselves while my head was singin like a teakettle.

The next minit, spang went the book agin cousin Pete's head.

"Whew!" ses he, "brother, I'm bob'd?"

"Who bob'd you?" ses they.

But cousin Pete didn't guess right nother, and the fust thing I know'd, whang they tuck me agin.

I was dredful anxious to guess right, but it was no use, I missed it every time, and so did cousin Pete, and the harder they hit the louder they laughed. One time they hit me a great deal softlier than the rest.

"Brother, I'm bob'd!" ses I.

"Who bob'd you?" ses they.

"Miss Mary Stallins," ses I.

"No, I never," ses she, and they all roared out worse than ever.

I begun to git monstrous tired of sich fun, which seemed so much like the boys and the frogs in the spellin book—for if it was fun to them it was death to me—and I don't know what I would done if Mary hadn't come up and untied the hankercher.

"Let's play something else," ses she, and her face was as red as fire, and she looked sort o' mad out of her eyes.

I seed ther was something wrong in a minit.

Well, they all went on playin "pawns," and "'pon honor," and "Here we go round the gooseberry bush," and "Oh, sister Feby, how merry we be," and sich tom fooleries till they played all they knowed, and while they was playin Mary told me all about the trick cousin Pete played on me.

It was the most oudacious take in I ever heard of. Do you think the cuss didn't set right down behind me, and never blindfolded himself at all, and hit me every lick himself, now and then hitttin his knee with the book, to make me blieve he was bob'd too! My head was a-buzzin with the licks when she told me how he done me, and I do blieve if it hadn't been for her I'd gin cousin Pete sich a lickin right thar in that room as he never had before in his born days. Blazes! but I was mad at fust. But Mary begged me not to raise no fuss about it, now it was all over, and she would fix him for his smartness. I hadn't no sort of a idee how she gwine to do it, but I know'd she was a match for cousin Pete any time, so I jest let her go ahed.

Well, she tuck the bominable fool off to one side and whispered to him like she was gwine to let him into a grate secret. She told him about a new play what she learned down to Macon when she was at the college, called "Interduction to the King and Queen," what she sed was a grate deal funnier than "Brother Bob," and got him to help to git 'em all to play it.

After she and him made it all up, cousin Pete put out three chairs close together in a row for a throne, and Mary she put a sheet over 'em to make 'em look a little grand. Bill Byers was to be King and Mary was to be Queen.

"Now, you must all come in tother room," ses cousin Pete,

"only them what belongs to the court, and then you must come in and be interduced, one at a time."

"I aint gwine," ses Tom Stallins, "for ther's some trick in it."

"No ther ain't," ses cousin Pete, "I'll give you my word ther ain't no trick—only a little fun."

"Well," ses I, "I's had fun enough for one night."

Mary looked at me and kind o' winked, and ses she, "You're one of the court you know, Majer; but jest go out till the court is sumonsed before the throne."

Well, we all went out, and bimeby Bill Byers called out the names of all the lords and ladys what belonged to the court, and we all went in and tuck chairs on both sides of the throne.

Cousin Pete was to be the fust one interduced, and Sam Rogers was to be the usher, the feller what interduced the company. Well, bimeby the door opened and in come cousin Pete, bowin and scrapin, and twistin and rigglein and puttin on more dandy airs than a French dancin master—he beat Crotchett all to smash. The King sot on one side of the throne and the Queen on tother, leavin room in the middle for some one else. Sam was so full of laugh at cousin Pete's anticks that he couldn't hardly speak.

"Doctor Peter Jones," ses he, "I interduce you to ther Majestys the King and Queen."

Cousin Pete scraped about a while and then drapt on one knee, right before 'em.

"Rise, gallant knight," ses Bill Byers, "rise, we dub you knight of the royal bath."

Cousin Pete got up and bowed and scraped a few more times, and went to set down between 'em, but they ris up jest as he went to set down, and the fust thing he knowed, kerslosh he

went, rite into a big tub mor'n half full of cold water, with nothing but his head and heels stickin out.

He tried to kiss Mary as he was takin his seat, and if you could jest seed him as he went into that tub with his arms reached out to her, and his mouth sot for a kiss, I do believe you'd laughed more'n you ever did before in your life. The fellers was all so 'spicious that some trick was gwine to be played, that they left the dore open, and when the thing tuck place they all run in shoutin and laughin like they would bust ther sides.

Pete got out as quick as he could, and I never seed a feller so wilted down in all my life. He was mad as a hornet, and sed it was a d—d mean trick to sarve ennybody so, specially in cold weather. And he went right off home by himself to dry.

Mary made the niggers take out the middle chair what was covered by the sheet, and put the tub of water in its place when we was all in tother room. Pete didn't have no suspicion that the trick was gwine to turn out that way. He thought the queen was gwine to sentence every feller what didn't kiss her as he sot down, to do something that would make fun for the rest, and he was jest gwine to open the game.

I felt perfectly satisfied after that, and I don't think cousin Pete will be quite so fond of funny tricks the next time. . . .

Your friend, till death, JOS. JONES.

—"*Major Jones's Courtship.*"

Henry Ward Beecher

Deacon Marble

How they ever made a deacon out of Jerry Marble I never could imagine! His was the kindest heart that ever bubbled and ran over. He was elastic, tough, incessantly active, and a prodigious worker. He seemed never to tire, but after the longest day's toil he sprang up, the moment he had done with work, as if he were a fine steel spring. A few hours' sleep sufficed him, and he saw the morning stars the year round. His weazened face was leather color, but forever dimpling and changing to keep some sort of congruity between itself and his eyes, that winked and blinked and spilled over with merry good nature. He always seemed afflicted when obliged to be sober. He had been known to laugh in meeting on several occasions, although he ran his face behind his handkerchief, and coughed, as if *that* was the matter, yet nobody believed it. Once, on a hot summer day, he saw Deacon Trowbridge, a sober and fat man, of great sobriety, gradually ascending from the bodily state into that spiritual condition called sleep. He was blameless of the act. He had struggled against the temptation with the whole virtue of a deacon. He had eaten two or three heads of fennel in vain, and a piece of orange-peel. He had stirred himself up, and fixed his eyes on the minister with intense firmness, only to have them grow gradually narrower and milder. If he held his head up firmly, it would with a sudden lapse fall away over backward. If he leaned it a little forward, it would drop suddenly into his bosom. At each nod, recovering himself, he would nod again, with his

eyes wide open, to impress upon the boys that he did it on purpose both times.

In what other painful event of life has a good man so little sympathy as when overcome with sleep in meeting time? Against the insidious seduction he arrays every conceivable resistance. He stands up awhile; he pinches himself, or pricks himself with pins. He looks up helplessly to the pulpit as if some succor might come thence. He crosses his legs uncomfortably, and attempts to recite the catechism or the multiplication table. He seizes a languid fan, which treacherously leaves him in a calm. He tries to reason, to notice the phenomena. Oh, that one could carry his pew to bed with him! What tossing wakefulness there! what fiery chase after somnolency! In his lawful bed a man cannot sleep, and in his pew he cannot keep awake! Happy man who does not sleep in church! Deacon Trowbridge was not that man. Deacon Marble was!

Deacon Marble witnessed the conflict we have sketched above, and when good Mr. Trowbridge gave his next lurch, recovering himself with a snort, and then drew out a red handkerchief and blew his nose with a loud imitation, as if to let the boys know that he had not been asleep, poor Deacon Marble was brought to a sore strait. But I have reason to think that he would have weathered the stress if it had not been for a sweet-faced little boy in the front of the gallery. The lad had been innocently watching the same scene, and at its climax laughed out loud, with a frank and musical explosion, and then suddenly disappeared backward into his mother's lap. That laugh was just too much, and Deacon Marble could no more help laughing than could Deacon Trowbridge help sleeping. Nor could he conceal it. Though he coughed and put up his handkerchief and hemmed—it *was* a laugh—

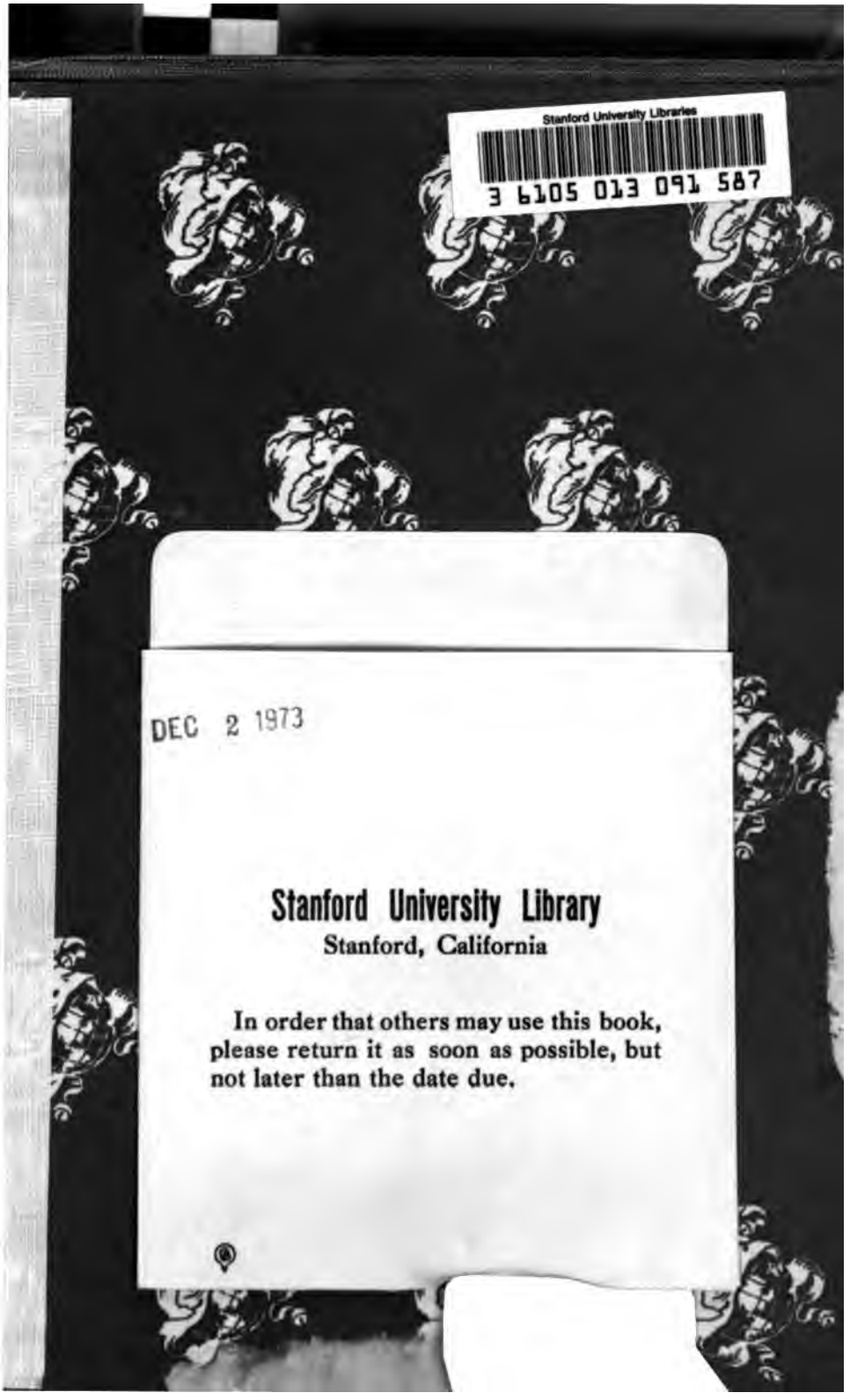
Deacon!—and every boy in the house knew it, and liked you better for it—so inexperienced were they.—*Norwood.*

The Deacon's Trout

He was a curious trout. I believe he knew Sunday just as well as Deacon Marble did. At any rate, the deacon thought the trout meant to aggravate him. The deacon, you know, is a little waggish. He often tells about that trout. Says he: "One Sunday morning, just as I got along by the willows, I heard an awful splash, and not ten feet from shore I saw the trout, as long as my arm, just curving over like a bow and going down with something for breakfast. Gracious! says I, and I almost jumped out of the wagon. But my wife Polly, says she, 'What on airth are you thinkin' of, deacon? It's Sabbath day, and you're goin' to meetin'! It's a pretty business for a deacon!' That sort o' cooled me off. But I do say that, for about a minute, I wished I wasn't a deacon. But 'twouldn't make any difference, for I came down next day to mill on purpose, and I came down once or twice more, and nothin' was to be seen, tho' I tried him with the most temptin' things. Wal, next Sunday I came along agin, and to save my life I couldn't keep off worldly and wanderin' thoughts. I tried to be sayin' my catechism, but I couldn't keep my eyes off the pond as we came up to the willows. I'd got along in the catechism, as smooth as the road, to the Fourth Commandment, and was sayin' it out loud for Polly, and jist as I was sayin': '*What is required in the Fourth Commandment?*' I heard a splash, and there was the trout, and, afore I could think, I said: 'Gracious, Polly, I must have that trout.' She

almost riz right up, 'I knew you wa'n't sayin' your catechism hearty. Is this the way you answer the question about keepin' the Lord's day? I'm ashamed, Deacon Marble,' says she. 'You'd better change your road, and go to meetin' on the road over the hill. If I was a deacon, I wouldn't let a fish's tail whisk the whole catechism out of my head;' and I had to go to meetin' on the hill road all the rest of the summer."

—*Norwood.*



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